LOOK OUT FOR "THE GIANT'S STROKE" IN THE LEDGER OF NEXT WEEK

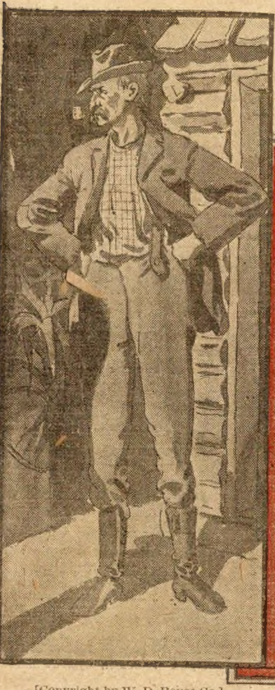
THE CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XXXVI. NO. 3. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1908. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.

MARRIED IN MASQUE;

Or, Opal Dayne's Terrible Mistake

By T. C. HARBAUGH



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Begun in No. 2, January 11. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER V.

THE CLOUD OF MYSTERY.

Doc Sample, the gambler physician of West Port, leaned against one of the ancient columns of the hotel and gazed abstractedly into space.

The loungers were everywhere, and only an occasional darky flitted across the public square.

Presently his ears caught the rapid galloping of a horse. It was clicketty clack down the road and the rider, whoever he was, seemed to have a mission of importance.

In a minute the animal stopped in front of the hotel, and Sample saw that a nergo boy bestrode the beast

He caught sight of the Doctor at once.

"Dat you, Doc?" he exclaimed. "Youse wanted up at Riverside at once. De old marster 's done shot!"

"What! Colonel Dayne?"

"Yas. He's breathin' yit, but it 's a close call fo' him."

The Doctor's horse stood at the rack, and in a second he was mounted.

Both rode away.

"How did it happen?" asked the Doctor. "Tell me as we ride."

"Dar's a mystery erbout hit," replied the boy. "Dey found him in de road by de Ghost's Holler. Dey got Click Barlow's hounds an' put 'em on de trail, but de dogs jes' throw hit up purty soon. Onions, Click said."

Sample nodded.

"No one seen about the place?"

"No, only Miss Opal shot at a man near de cabins las' night."

"Significant, maybe," observed the Doctor, and then he was silent for the rest of the ride.

There was a lot of excitement at Riverside when Doc Sample reached the place.

He examined the wound in the head, which was easily done, for Colonel Dayne was still unconscious. He shook his head over it and said in reply to a question that there was a chance.

During the examination Opal stood silent near the couch. Her face was white and drawn, telling of the agony that racked her soul. What was passing through her mind no one knew. It was her secret.

What had happened after her strange wedding? Had Mark Calvert boasted to any one of his revenge and triumph? And where was Guy that he had not heard of the marriage in masque?

The beautiful girl watched the man of medicine closely and noted his grave countenance.

Better that her father should die and never know of her wild escapade.

At last Doc Sample came over to her.

"I cannot tell you how I sympathize with you, Miss Opal," he said in tones that confirmed the truth of his words. "There is hope for your father, but his mind may never be as strong as it was."

"Then we may never know who did it."

"As the deed was done in the dark, he may not have seen his enemy."

"That is true, but I shall know."

The Doctor looked at the girl and noted the determination in which her words were couched.

"We will all help you," said he.

"I shall need no help," was the reply. "I shall take up this trail myself and pursue it to the bitter end."

A moment's silence fell between the two.

"Doctor Sample," said Opal suddenly, "I have a confession to make. It must come out soon, and you might as well hear it from my lips now."

They walked out upon the porch and Opal continued:

"I was married tonight,"

"Tonight?"

"Yes. We were married by Parson Bascom."

"I must offer congratulations, though your marriage night is one of tragedy."

"And desperate wickedness in more ways than one."

"I do not understand, Miss Dayne."

"I will tell you. Tonight I became the bride of Mark Calvert."

Sample, in utter astonishment, fell back a pace with a great cry of consternation. 'I thought——"

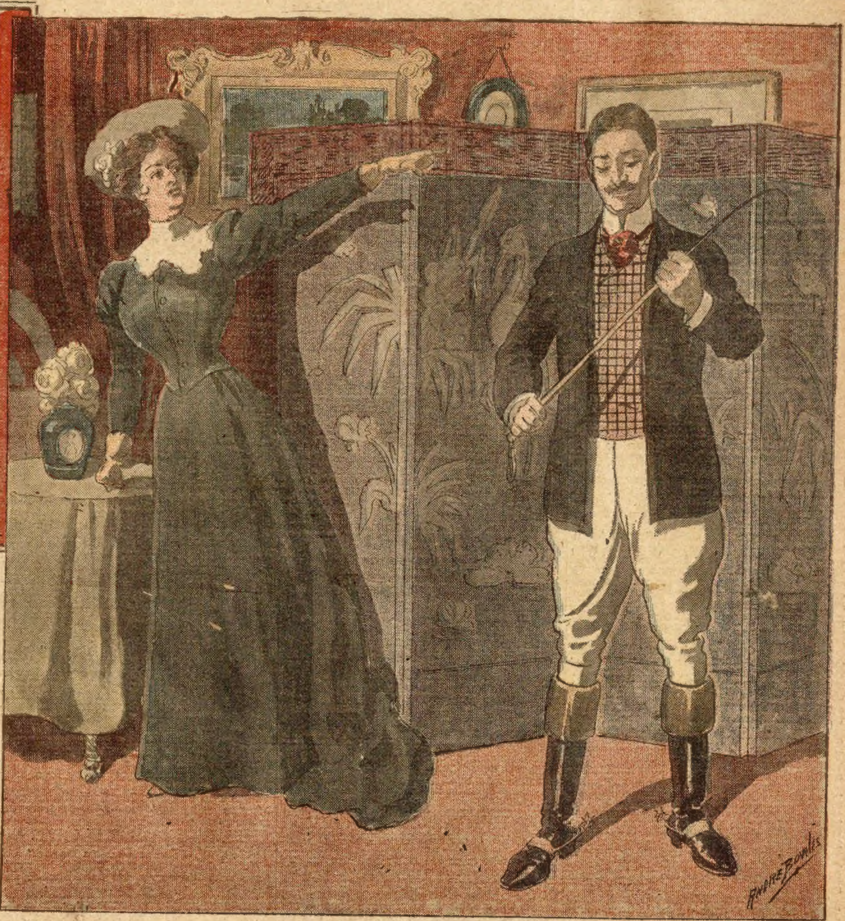
"Yes, you thought with the whole countryside that I was engaged to Mr. Brinton?" Opal smiled faintly.

"That is true, to Mr. Brinton."

"Well, so I was, but this wretch took advantage of some sinister knowledge, obtained how, I do not know, and became the bridegroom."

"But you knew it at the time?"

"There is just where I was deceived. It was a foolish whim of mine to be married in masque, and I was. I did not see his



face till after the ceremony. You can see how recklessly foolish I have been, Doctor."

"I never heard of anything quite so strange."

"Nor so wicked."

"But, Mr. Brinton——"

"I cannot say whether he has heard of it. He certainly knows nothing of the escapade, else I should have been asked for an explanation, short as the time has been. I am unworthy to look him in the face."

"The villainy is all on Mark Calvert's soul. Why did he do this?"

"For motives of revenge. He is papa's enemy. He has said tnat he would 'get even' with papa some time."

Then Opal proceeded and told the whole story of the strange marriage. Doc Sample listened like one in a dream.

"This marriage by deceit can be annulled," said he when she had finished.

"By the law, you mean?"

"Yes."

"There is another way," and the lips of the fair speaker came together in a terrible manner.

"It is outrageous! I know Calvert well and, reckless as he is, I never thought he would resort to anything of this kind."

"I am his wife, just the same. I shall hail the day when I am his widow."

The Doctor went in to see his patient before leaving and, promising to return early in the morning, rode away. He knew how the excitement would ebb and flow as soon as the two crimes were known. Colonel Dayne was respected throughout the distract and, excepting the few enemies he had, was a general favorite.

"I'll hunt the young rascal up," said Doc Sample to himself, as he went down the road. "But first I'll see Brinton, for I will ride past his home, and inform him of the shooting."

When he reached the forks in the road he turned in the direction of the little Brinton plantation and drew rein before the house. It was the abode of silence. Brinton lived alone with the exception of a colored housekeeper, and Sample, mounting the porch, rapped loudly on the door.

A voice from one of the upper windows greeted him. It was the voice of the housekeeper.

"Mr. Brinton 's not at home," said the negress. "He went off on Black Dan erbout dusk an' dat's all I know."

"You don't know where he went?"

"He never told me. But he was all fixed up spruce like, es ef he was goin' to a weddin' an'——"

"Left no word at all? I say, do you know what's taken place on Colonel Dayne's plantation?"

"Fo' de Lawd, no!" cried the woman.

"The Colonel has been ambushed and nearly killed."

There was a cry of astonishment and the negress came bouncing upon the porch.

"You doan't tell me?" she exclaimed. "An' what will become of Miss Opal?"

"He isn't dead, but it is a close call. Tell Mr. Guy when he comes back, will you?"

"I'll send him over jes' as soon es he comes, if he ebber does, fo' he's powerful sweet on de old Kunnel's gal."

Sample turned his horse's head toward West Port. Ten minutes later he rode up to another house, the Calvert home.

His rap brought Mark to the door.

"In the name of goodness are you mad, Mark Calvert?" cried the Doctor, the moment he caught sight of the young man.

"You know it, do you?"

"She told me."

"My wife did, eh? I'll see you tomorrow. I was just going to bed," and the door was shut in Doc Sample's face.

CHAPTER VI.

OPAL AND RUBY.

Almost before sunrise the following day, news of the tragedy of the plantation was known over the entire district. West Port had something new to talk about, and it became the sole topic of conversation. Not only this, but somehow or other, the story of the romantic marriage got abroad and deepened the excitement.

Then came the news that Guy Brinton had not been seen since dusk of the preceding day, and a little later on his horse was found tied to a small pine at the edge of the Black Swamp. At once a party was organized to search the swamp, and men and dogs penetrated its disgusting area.

Nothing came of the search, and the hunters came out of the place bootless and mystified.

Meanwhile Opal, at home within the darkened room where her father lay battling for life, had shown herself to but few. Her grief was respected by all who came to the plantation, and these people gathered in little groups as they discussed the terrible events of the last few hours.

It was near the close of the day when Opal was told that Miss Ruby Barton would like to see her. Dayne's daughter went into the room where her caller was and greeted her.

Miss Barton was a beautiful girl who lived beyond the hills nearby, and it was known that her relatives were not in accord with Colonel Dayne, regarding certain questions that had added fire to the feud.

As Opal entered the room Ruby Barton drew herself to her full stature, and gave her a flashing look from the depths of her sloe-black eyes.

"I cannot believe it!" cried Miss Barton. "It all seems so incredible that I have come to you for an explanation."

"I scarcely comprehend."

"Then it is not true?"

"If you will be so kind as to explain——"

"I mean this report of your marriage. Are you the wife of Mark Calvert?"

"Unfortunately I am," answered Opal.

"Unfortunately, you say. You mean that you have stolen him from me?"

"From you? I did not know——"

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"There need be no equivocation between us," broke in Ruby Barton. "You know that I loved Mark Calvert——"

"Would to Heaven he had chosen you, then," interrupted Opal. "But he chose to wreak his revenge upon me."

"But you knew——"

"One moment," said Opal, lifting her hand. "You seem not to have heard the particulars of the ceremony performed by Parson Bascom."

"You have admitted that you are the wife of Mark Calvert. It not that gall enough?"

"It was not a free marriage on my part."

"But you went with him to the preacher's house."

"Yes—en masque."

"I've heard a whisper of that," cried Ruby. "But you knew with whom you went?"

"I did not. There is where the deception comes in. I was unaware of the identity of the man I accompanied to the house on the hill, until after the ceremony."

For a moment Miss Barton looked mystified.

"I don't believe your story," she said. "It is preposterous. That you should deliberately throw down Guy Brinton and rob me of Mark Calvert is enough to set my heart on fire."

"But, my dear Miss Barton——"

Ruby was pacing the carpet of the little room with the strides of an enraged tiger cat. Her face was red and white by turns and all at once she whirled and faced Opal.

"You almost deserve killing!" she hissed, her whole frame shaking with excitement and her hands clinched till the transparent nails cut little gashes in her palms.

"You can have him when I am through with him," said Colonel Dayne's daughter.

"When you are through with him, eh? But you are his wife!"

"I shall not bear that title long, I trust."

"Why did you throw Guy Brinton down? I thought you were engaged to him."

"I was."

"You must have no heart—none at all," cried Ruby. "This is the lowest bit of business I ever heard of."

"You don't know that Guy's horse was found riderless at the edge of the Black Swamp?"

"That's a part of the plotting which resulted in this infamous marriage."

"Perhaps it is," naively answered Opal. "If it is a part of the plot, I assure you that I had no hand in it."

"Why didn't you repudiate the marriage the moment you discovered what you chose to term the deception?"

"Horror and astonishment sealed my lips."

"That will not do," and the girl from beyond the hills walked to the door and laid her hand on the knob. "We are enemies from this time on, enemies to the death! You have robbed me of the only man I ever loved, and, to cap the climax, you essay to deceive me with a specious story about a marriage en masque."

"As I live, and before God, what I have said is true!" declared Opal.

"Don't top your statements with perjury!" was the bitter answer. "You have said enough!"

"Then, since you will not believe me, the future shall solve it all."

"But I am to remain robbed and the laughing stock of the whole district."

"You are unreasonable. If you would wait for the proofs I shall furnish——"

"Furnish them now, and here."

"That I cannot do beyond my own word, which, unfortunately, is unsupported. Go and ask Mark Calvert."

"Face him, when he is your husband? I would rather hold my right hand in the fire till it is consumed. He belongs to you and I wish you the bitterness which the coming years shall bring to your door. Good-night, Mrs. Calvert."

The last word sank like a drop of burning lava into the depths of Opal Dayne's soul. It burned as it sank.

"Don't utter in my presence again that detestable name!" she cried, as she sprang forward and seized the wrist of the woman at the door. "It sears my better nature! I have been foolish, I will admit that. But that name I shall never bear with my consent."

"You consented at the altar!"

"I thought it was Guy."

"That story will not do!" exclaimed Miss Barton. "A woman generally knows whom she weds. I wish you happiness, Mrs. Calvert," and with this Ruby opened the door.

"One moment," and Opal's hand detained her. "You shall hear from me. You shall see a part of the grief that weighs me down and makes me the most miserable woman on earth. Come with me into yon room."

"Your father? I heard about the shooting. I have nothing to do with him. I——"

"You must see him," and Ruby was dragged across the little room and the hand of Opal opened the door.

The chamber where Colonel Dayne lay was dimly lighted by a lamp and the old man was alone. His white face bound with the Doctor's bandages, was distinctly visible and enhanced the ghastliness of the picture.

Opal dragged the unwilling visitor to the side of the couch and laid her right hand softly upon her sleeping parent's forehead.

"You will hear me now; you must," she said, in almost fierce tones. "After that you may be my enemy if you will. I swear in the presence of my father, whose life seems to be ebbing away, that I became the unwilling wife of Mark Calvert. It was an infamous trick of his. I never loved the wretch. I was the promised wife of Guy Brinton. I swear that my marriage to him was without my consent. I thought it was Guy. You say you love Mark Calvert? God pity you, Ruby Barton. Now do you believe me?"

Ruby drew back, pulling lose from the grip of Opal's hand.

"Let me go!" she almost shrieked. "Heaven pity us both!"

In another moment she was beyond the room, giving her horse the whip as she raced over the ghostly road.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRISONER OF THE SWAMP.

Than the Black Swamp there was no more dreaded nor ghostlier bit of territory in the vicinity of West Port. It covered a wide area and the most fearless hearted shunned its depths as they would shun a house of the plague. The negroes would not haunt its noxious shades, save when pursued by the law, and even then they were in fear of death from the venomous serpents that dwelt there.

Beyond the spot penetrated by the searchers for Guy Brinton, stood an old cabin built long before the war. It was a ramshackle affair and but few knew of its existence.

Had the reader entered it on the morning after the startling events we have described, he would have seen a man standing in front of this dilapidated structure, a long, lean specimen of humanity, whose sallow face denoted that if he were not a criminal he must be of an evil nature.

He had the eyes of the hawk in his head, and as he sent his gaze amid the tangle of low bushes in front of him he chuckled to himself.

"He's safe here," said this person. "They won't get this far in the old Black. And it wouldn't be safe for them to look too far."

The light of day seldom penetrated to where this man stood, and all around was the hiss of the reptile and the plunge of the rats.

At last, as if satisfied with his survey, he turned back to the hut and, unbarring the low door, entered and was lost to view.

The hut was a shambles inside. It was full of foul odors, as if it were the lair of some wild beast.

A little light struggled into the place, showing a cot at one side of the only room. Upon this cot, bound with heavy cords, lay a man as if in a stupor.

The cadaverous guard looked at him a few moments, and then fell to cleaning a villainous looking weapon.

The occupant of the cot stirred.

"How long is this indignity to last, will you let me ask?" he inquired.

"Till it's over," was the growled answer.

"You're hired by your master?"

"What if I am? I know my business."

"You surely do," the speaker smiled faintly. "You're but the tool of the greatest rascal in all the States."

"That's complimentary to my employer. I say it would give me pleasure if you keep your opinions to yourself."

"When is he coming here?"

"When it suits him, I suppose."

"This is the height of rascality. I was taken from my horse on the highroad and carried to this infamous place——"

"I'm glad to see that your memory serves you well."

"This is Mark Calvert's work. In the name of Heaven, what are his designs?"

"You'll have to ask him."

"I will when he comes and he shall give me a truthful answer."

"That's it," grinned the man with the weapon. "You're quite shut off from the world, eh, Mr. Brinton?"

"Yes, the victim of some devilish plot."

Guy Brinton, the prisoner of the swamp hut, turned his face away and said no more.

The man at the little window finished his work and put up the revolver.

"I say," he said suddenly looking at Guy, "I say, Mr. Brinton, you don't know what's happened lately?"

"How should I, cooped up in this pest hole?"

"Well, I'll proceed to enlighten you. In the first place another man got winged last night."

"Shot, you mean?"

"Yes."

"In a cowardly manner, of course?"

"In the usual manner, I should say. The old Colonel got it."

"You don't refer to Colonel Dayne?"

"To none other, Mr. Brinton."

"Where did it happen?"

"In Ghost Holler."

"A fit place for the devil's work," commented Guy. "Was he killed?"

"Not quite, but I guess he'll need an undertaker before long."

"The fiends!" cried the prisoner of the cabin. "When are they going to stop their infamous work?"

"When all scores are paid off and not before."

"There is coming a day of retribution for some people."

"But that's not all the news."

"No?"

"There was a wedding last night."

Guy thought of the one that was to have been with himself the happy groom, but he did not speak.

"It has become the talk of the district," continued the other. "It was so unexpected. Who would have thought that Calvert would have married that girl?"

"What girl?"

"Your couldn't guess, I suppose?"

"I could not, unless he married Ruby Barton, who is said to be in love with him."

"Old Pop Barton's lass? Well, he gave her the go-by and took a bride from the aristocratic classes."

"You will have to answer your own question if you want to enlighten me."

"Well, sir, he married Miss Dayne."

Guy Brinton started as though he would have rent his bonds, his face flushed and then grew ghastly in hue.

"If you mean Opal Dayne, you've uttered a dastardly lie!"

"That's pretty hard to take, even from you. But, to be plain with you, I don't mean any one else."

"It's false, I say! What, Opal the wife of Mark Calvert, to whom I owe my imprisonment in this terrible place, as I verily believe? I won't believe it!"

"Just as you please. Use your own judgment in that matter," drawled the guard.

"Where were they married?"

"At Parson Bascomb's."

"The preacher on the hill?"

"Exactly. They went there in masks, they say——"

"I see through it all, now," broke in the man on the cot. "He must have overheard our plans——"

"Whose plans, Mr. Brinton?"

"Opal's and mine."

"Oh, you had plans, then?"

"We agreed to be married en masque. I remember that we were startled by a noise in the wood and I told Opal it must have been a squirrel. He heard our plans, I say."

"I can't say as to that, but Miss Dayne is the wife of Mark Calvert."

Guy's teeth ground till they seemed to crack.

"Tnat's all I know," pursued the guard. "They're married and that's tne end of the matter."

The speaker went over to the door and peered out.

He was followed by the gaze of the prisoner.

"What became of Black Dan, my horse?" he asked.

"They say they found him."

"Good! Then they'll find me."

"Don't set your hopes too high," chuckled the man. "They've searched the old Black and have given it up."

"Who led the party?"

"Chuck Nippers, the man what did that devil deed at Petersburg, during the war."

"He's about as bad a man as the person to whom I owe my imprisonment here. But that infamous marriage! Where did Calvert take—his duped bride?"

"Oh, she went right home and is there now taking care of her father, the old Colonel."

"Thank Heaven!"

"What for? When Calvert wants his wife he'll have her in spite of the whole State of Mississippi."

"We shall see," cried Guy, and, setting his teeth hard, he turned his face from his tormentor.

Opal, the wife of Mark Calvert? It was torture unspeakable.

CHAPTER VIII.

A THANKLESS WARNING.

Mark Calvert was about to start to West Port when, glancing out of the window, he saw Miss Ruby Barton dismounting in front of the porch.

"The sort of visitor I care little about, just now," he said aloud to himself. "Why in the devil's name couldn't that woman have kept her distance?"

The front door opened.

"Mis' Barton wants to know if you're at home, Marse Calvert?" said the negro who made his appearance.

"Hang it all, tell her yes."

The message was delivered and Ruby mounted the porch and opened the door.

Mark had dropped into a large armchair and was coolly waiting for the girl.

"Good-morning, Miss Barton," he said in the most cheerful of tones. "You are out bright and early, I see?"

"Yes, and I have come to see you."

"That's quite an honor, I'm sure. You are given to such early calls?"

"I am not," and then Ruby drew off and for a moment studied the cool face of the man in the chair.

"What's the news on the outside?" queried Mark. "I have been at home so long that I've quite lost the run of public affairs, to say nothing of country gossip."

"At home?" echoed the girl. "You take time though to run out and get married."

Calvert laughed.

"So you've heard of that little episode? It's pretty hard to keep people from finding out things."

Ruby stepped over to a spot on the carpet from which she could fairly confront Calvert.

"You admit it, then?"

"Why not? Isn't it always best to confess to the truth?"

"You married Miss Dayne against her will."

"I'll own that she wasn't exactly desirous of becoming Mrs. Mark Calvert——"

"Far from it. I have come to warn you, Mark."

"You? to warn me? Against whom?"

"Your wife."

Mark did not betray any emotion.

"What does the lady propose to do?"

"To kill you. That's it, without mincing words."

"Who says so?"

"I've seen her."

"Ah! So the new Mrs. Calvert has ulterior designs against her husband?"

"She has. I have been to her home. You can never claim your wife."

"Who says I ever intend to?"

Ruby came forward, her dark eyes centered upon Calvert.

"How far do you intend carrying your baseness?" she demanded. "I want to know."

"And by what right have you to judge my acts? I never offered to make you Mrs. Calvert."

"No, but I have loved you. In secret I have given you the adoration of a woman's soul. I have loved you as you must have suspected, and now you turn from me and take for your wife a woman who has a right to send a bullet through your head."

"Don't get excited, Miss Barton. This matter can be argued without that."

"It is my love for you that has brought me here with the warning I have just spoken."

"Was my wife specially bitter?"

"Why should she not be with her father fatally wounded and herself an unwilling wife? Bitter? You should have heard her, Mark Calvert."

"I suppose you made a scene at the house?"

"I was not quiet, I'll admit that. She admitted that you had married her by chicanery, that she thought she was going to the altar with Guy Brinton. You must have overheard their plans about the masked marriage."

"I have ears, Miss Barton."

"Opal is half beside herself. You know something of the Dayne blood."

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"I've heard about it."

"And don't you think yourself lucky that Colonel Dayne is on his death-bed and not able to hunt you down?"

"Oh, I don't now."

"You do know. And Guy Brinton is missing, though they've found his horse at the edge of the Black Swamp."

"I wonder what's become of him?"

Mark's words were couched in the most innocent of tones, but they only brought Ruby a step closer.

"Don't lie to me, man!" she exclaimed as her face grew paler. "You need not wonder when you know."

"I?"

"Yes. You are the only person who would profit in any way by the disappearance of Guy Brinton. You know where he is and you will surely reap the whirlwind."

"No preaching, if you please," said Mark, rising and crossing the room. "I did not send for you, Miss Barton, and, being married, I cannot listen to any admissions of love on your part."

"I am sorry I uncovered my love. But for all that, Mark, I deem it my duty to warn you."

"Against Mrs. Calvert, you mean?"

"Yes, and against others. Doctor Sample is talking a great deal and——"

"Oh, that poor wretch?" sneered Mark. "I say, Miss Barton, I hope you haven't paid any attention to the frothings of Doc Sample."

"He is a man, for all his evil nature. He says he is going to bring Colonel Dayne out of the shadows, and if he does——"

"Some one will attend to Doc Sample."

Calvert opened the sideboard in the wall and took therefrom a bottle and a glass.

"I'll be hanged if you haven't unstrung my nerves a trifle," he remarked with a smirk and a glance at Ruby. "You'll not object to my taking a bracer?"

"You mean more soul poison?" cried the girl, as she bounded across the room and snatched the glass from Mark's hand. "There's a soul in you after all, Mark Calvert, and, but for your temper and associations, you might be a man in the community."

"I am. I own three thousand acres of the best land in old Mississippi. I'm almost monarch of all I survey. There's no better blood than that of the Calverts. They fought with old Ironsides in the days of Roundhead and Cavalier——"

"And never a one of them dragged a young girl to the altar nor blighted his own life with the brew of hell."

"By George! you're getting dramatic," sarcastically laughed Calvert. "Maybe I married the wrong woman."

"You surely did!" cried Ruby. "You have not only blighted her life, but your vengeance against her father will fall far short of its designs."

"You mean if the old man recovers?"

"If he dies it will only give power to the arm of avenger."

"Pish!" exclaimed Calvert. "I don't thank you for coming here, though under other circumstances, Miss Ruby, I should enjoy your society. Just now I am busy, and I shall be glad if you will terminate this interview."

The Southern girl drew back and looked at him.

"Just as you say," she cried. "If you have no thanks for my mission, I can go. But, remember, Mark Calvert, that you had the heart of Ruby Barton, and she was yours for the asking."

"I must thank you for this knowledge. But it is too late, my dear girl. I am now a benedict and can entertain no propositions of the heart, not even when they come from such a beautiful woman as yourself."

Choking back her indignation, Ruby Barton opened the door and looked for a whole second into his face.

"I love you yet, Mark Calvert," she exclaimed, "and I would save you from your nemesis, but since you will not let me, the whirlwind harvest must be yours!"

She was gone.

This interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the reader with some very startling episodes and situations. Its perusal to the end will highly reward you. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly advised to send in the price of subscription at once. If you do so, we will be glad to send you free one of our splendid King Cameras or any six patterns you may select from our pattern page, or one of our fine woolen shawls. Look at our advertisement of these costly premiums.

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What She Became.

Jack—There goes Mrs. Parsons. She used to be a decidedly pert girl.

Tom—Isn't she still pert.

Jack—No. Marriage seems to have tamed her and now she's an ex-pert.

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ITS ORIGIN.

Fair Cleopatra held the adder,
And as it to her clung
She smiled, though pale and sadder—
And gently whispered: "Stung!"

THE CUDDLEY KIND.

Some like the girl that rides and shoots, the girl with lots of fire;
The mannish girl who shrilly hoots at furbelowed attire,
But I'm old fashioned, I'm afraid, and quite the times behind.
I'll let you have the mannish maid. Gimme the cuddley kind.

I'll take the girl with frills and things, and heels unduly high;
The fluffy girl that to you clings at thoughts of danger nigh.
The mannish girl, no doubt, is smart and has a brilliant mind,
But still she doesn't win my heart. Gimme the cuddley kind.

HOW EDGERLEY WAS TRAPPED.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

Mr. Luke Edgerley was a model farmer.

Everything about his establishment was neat as waxwork—that is, if waxwork is neat, as we have always been led to suppose.

He prided himself particularly on his trim fences, and his smooth lawns, and fields with not a weed to be seen anywhere. But especially he prided himself on his cantaloup garden. He had laid out the ground with great care, manured it highly, worked it deep and mellow, imported the seeds himself, and planted them with great care. After the vines were up he had watched them faithfully, killing the bugs one by one, which is the only way, and getting up an hour earlier than usual every morning with this especial purpose in view.

His wife was "sick and tired of hearing about that melon-bed," she said, "for all Luke wanted to talk about was cantaloups, and he smelt so strong of bugs all the time that it turned her stomach, and took away her appetite for her food."

By and by the melons began to ripen, and Luke was in high spirits. He had, indeed, a fine lot of them, and it was, perhaps, quite excusable in him to feel proud of them. Already he had selected one for the minister, one for Deacon Smallhead, and one for Bangs, the new doctor. These were to be presented when they were fully ripe, and Luke was continually expatiating upon the gratitude and delight with which they would be received.

He was not so sure but the parson would allude to it, vaguely, of course, in his opening prayer on Sunday; and Deacon Smallhead would certainly have something to say about "temporal blessings;" and as for Bangs, why, he had a practice to build up, and Luke wanted to be vaccinated, and he rather calculated on Doctor Bangs doing the little job for nothing, after he had received the melon.

Judge, then, of Luke's dismay when he found, on going out to inspect his treasures as usual one morning, that the three very identical melons he had selected for the three gentlemen we have mentioned were missing!

With mad haste he searched the whole grounds, but the three best melons were nowhere to be found. He compelled his wife, and the two hired men, and his sons, Jack and George, to join in the search; but it was all of no avail—the cantaloups had disappeared, and refused to be discovered.

Mr. Edgerley was in despair. He argued the matter with his wife, from every possible point of view, until the good lady became irritated, and very unfeelingly told him that she was glad of it, for she was "nigh about crazy with so much folderol about them pesky cantaloups."

Luke, however, decided that he would fix things for the thieves. In the first place, he set a couple of steel traps in the melon-patch, and in the next place he would lie awake that night, and if he heard the least sound anywhere he would jump out of bed, seize his old musket, and pursue the thieving rascals.

But, being a rather sleepy man, he fell into such a profound nap that he did not awake until day dawned, and then, when he went out to his melons, he found there were three more gone. And the traps were not sprung, either!

Mr. Edgerley was in a dreadful state of mind all day, but when night came he refused to go to bed. He was going to sit up and watch his melons. So he concealed himself in a corner of the lot behind some currant bushes and waited.

About 10 o'clock he heard a stealthy footstep. Raising himself on his elbow, he looked around. There was no moon, and the stars were faint in a hazy sky, but still there was light enough to show him a tall, gaunt figure, clad in white, looming up before him. In the dim light the figure looked supernaturally tall, and Luke was a sincere believer in ghosts. The sight of this specter struck terror to his soul.

His heart beat so rapidly that he could hardly get his breath.

"Oh, my!" he exclaimed to himself. "If it should be an apparition! I wonder if they ever do eat anything. I darsent fire—I darsent do anything. I wish I was in the house abed with Sally—I vow I do."

The white figure advanced nearer, with slow, deliberate steps, as if it knew there were traps set. By and by it stooped down, plucked off a melon, and came straight toward Luke.

Terror got the better of our hero. Flinging away his musket, he struck a bee-line for the house, right across the melon-vines, all unmindful of the traps. In an instant he was fast by one foot, and not realizing what had happened, and thinking he was in the clutch of the ghost, he gave a tremendous leap forward, and was caught by the other foot in the other trap.

Here was a dreadful predicament, for the traps were both securely fastened to the fence, and they were too far apart to make it exactly comfortable for a man to have one foot in one trap and the other foot in the other.

He made frantic efforts to escape, but it was a very neatly done job—the setting of the traps—and he was fast.

To increase his dismay, the specter was bearing down upon him, with a huge melon under each arm.

Luke uttered an unearthly yell, which reached the ears of every sleeper in the house, and caused the ghost to drop the plunder with a wild scream of affright.

"Grab her, boys! grab her!" cried Luke to the hired men, who had appeared on the scene in very scanty apparel. "Don't let her git off!"

But the woman—for it evidently was a woman—leaped through the currant-bushes, screaming at the top of her voice for "Luke! Luke!" and disappeared in the direction of the house.

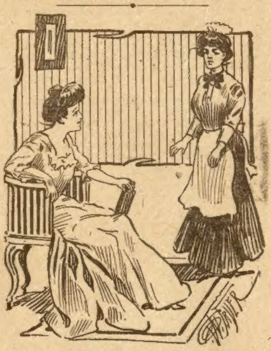
"My stars!" cried Mr. Edgerley, "that sounded like Sally's voice. You don't suppose—it can't be—— Dear me! it beats everything!"

"Haven't I heard you say that your wife was a sleep-walker?" asked one of the men.

"By Jinks!" cried Mr. Edgerley, "you've hit it, Styles. And she's the thief! Undo my legs! I'm nigh about split in two. It's lucky that nobody with short legs got caught in them traps. And look here, boys, don't say anything about this, and next week we'll have an oyster supper.

Mrs. Edgerley was immensely surprised at what she had been doing, but her husband was greatly relieved. He felt the melons were not lost. Neither were they, for Styles found them all next day, safely stowed away in the haymow.

But the story got out somehow, and the neighbors are always teasing Luke about getting caught in his own traps.



Mrs. Uptydate—Marie, have you finished bathing the dog?

The Maid—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Uptydate—Did you tie the pink ribbon around his neck?

Maid—Yes'm.

Mrs. Uptydate—Then you can go and see what baby is crying about.

Some Funny Spells.

"A watch may need cleaning when it is not dirty at all," said a watchmaker. "This sometimes accounts for a great deal of misunderstanding between the owner of a new watch and the watchmaker to whom it is brought for examination. Furthermore a watch which has never been worn may need cleaning.

"A common reason is that oil in a watch may have dried up around the pivot and become sticky, thus causing the watch to go very slowly or to stop entirely, in which case of course it needs not only cleaning but the addition of fresh oil.

"The oil which is considered best for watches is made from the porpoise or black-fish jawbone. These oils have a most disagreeable odor and have to be treated chemically before being used.

"The skeleton of the fish, with only the head left on, is hung in the hot sun for several days and the oil allowed to ooze out slowly. All the volatile parts of the oil are naturally neutralized in this manner and the oil collected is said to remain fluid and clear when it comes in contact with metal for as long as ten years.

"Makers of chronometers are especially scrupulous in the preparation of oils, owing to the accuracy which is demanded of these delicate timepieces, and often prepare their own oil by mixing porpoise, sperm, olive and neatsfoot and a small quantity of mineral oil. When these oils are mixed it is customary to keep them in an uncorked bottle exposed to the sun. This is done to allow all foreign and coloring substances to fall to the bottom, after which the oil is filtered through a mixture of charcoal dust and animal charcoal.

"Clocks sometimes stop running for no apparent reason. During an electric storm it is not uncommon for them to stop abruptly, only to resume their regular functions with as much accuracy as ever after a certain interval of time. This interval may be only for a few moments or it may be for years.

"On the other hand, electric storms have been known to be responsible for the starting of old clocks which had remained mute and inactive for years. Imagine the utter amazement of the members of the household upon suddenly hearing the solemn tick-tack of a stately old hall clock which from all appearances had long ago retired from active service."

A Prayer.

A little girl of 4 or 5 was quietly playing on the porch one afternoon, while her father and one of his friends were enjoying a smoke and a chat on political matters. They paid no attention to the little girl, who in turn seemed entirely absorbed in her dolls and her Teddy bear.

When the guest had gone and bedtime came, the child's mother noticed that she was unusually silent and thoughtful. And when she knelt to say her prayers there came a pause after the usual petitions, and then she resumed very earnestly:

"And now, God, please take great care of yourself, for if anything should happen to you, we should only have Mr. Roosevelt—and he hasn't come up to papa's expectations."

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I have cured thousands. I can cure you if you come to me before it is too late.

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Don't delay. Write immediately. A post-card, with your address upon it, sent off NOW will secure one of the free treatments. An envelope containing your address, put in this mail will bring you what you have longed for, but despaired of—a cure for Catarrh. Tomorrow may be too late. Be one of the fortunate people to get one of these free treatments for Catarrh. Write right now.

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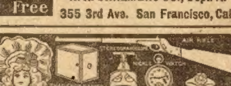

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The Crime of the Black Thirteen

By LIEUT. GERALD CARLTON

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Begun in No. 1, Jan. 4. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER VI.

CYRIL SPENCER'S DOUBLE.

We have described the return of Merrivale and Kingsley from their drive in Prospect Park, their conversation later in the library, and the dire threat of the Wall street magnate, from which the reader may form his own conclusions as to how far Kingsley was in Merrivale's power, and to what extent he would put on the screws if Kingsley failed to keep his pact with him.

This fact, as the reader knows, had to do with the wedding of Kingsley's adopted daughter to the big operator.

Whether Merrivale had told the entire truth or not will appear later.

Let us go back a day previous to the interview alluded to.

The scene is again in the Kingsley mansion, the dramatis personae two girls, both fair and beautiful.

Rarely was there to be met with a more perfect specimen of female loveliness than Lillian Kingsley, so it was little wonder that she was looked upon as one of the most desirable matrimonial catches in Greater New York.

Lillian was barely eighteen, yet her beauty was of the pronounced character of a girl four or five years older, and her figure exquisite and symmetrical in its outlines; but so modest in her deportment was this beautiful girl that the most critical and exacting could find no fault with her.

Lillian Kingsley was a young lady of good sense and guilelessness of heart, having no overweening estimate of herself or her charm—"just one of the people, no more and no less," as she often expressed it.

She cared little for society; on the other hand she cared a good deal more for books and studies from which solid information could be derived.

Nellie Beckwith, who acted as Lillian's companion, was distantly related to Herbert Kingsley. She was a young woman of charming personality, a few years older than her friend and probably much more daring and outspoken.

"I don't quite understand Mr. Merrivale," said Nellie Beckwith, resuming the thread of the conversation which had been passing between them. "Nor can I, for the life of me, see why he is trying to ruin that young man's character——"

"You mean Cyril?" Lillian interrupted, as a sad look came into her eyes.

"Yes, Cyril Spencer! I can only account for Mr. Merrivale's hatred of the young man in—in one way," replied Nellie, with a tremor of her lips that did not pass unnoticed by her friend.

"Yes, I know, Nellie; it's through me," replied Lillian, sadly. "He's told father some awful stories about Cyril, has he not?"

"I know he has and the greater part lies," declared Nellie defiantly. "Cyril may be a little wild, but nothing can convince me that he is a hundreth part as black as Merrivale paints him. His face, his eyes—everything," added Miss Beckwith, with generous warmth, "gives the lie to Merrivale's description of the young man. I only hope Mr. Kingsley won't give too much credit to his fabrications, for I'm sure they're cut from the whole cloth. I don't like Merrivale's face and I'm certain he's a man who'd stop at nothing to attain his ends. Mr. Kingsley ought to show him the door. I'm sure I would if I were in Mr. Kingsley's place," the girl resolutely added.

"Nellie!"

"Yes, Lillian dear?"

"Do you think Mr. Merrivale's antipathy to Mr. Spencer would carry him farther than blackening his character?"

"What!" exclaimed Miss Beckwith. "Ah, Lillian, do you think that a man with Merrivale's face would stop at anything? If you do, you'll awake some morning to find what a fatal error you've made. I would sooner trust Satan than trust Merrivale, Lillian Kingsley. And the worst of it is that he has the power to work so much harm, through his ill-gotten millions. Do you know, Lillian, that there are those in Greater New York who for a few hundred dollars would do actual murder?"

Miss Kingsley grew deathly pale at this intimation. But she was very undemonstrative—a girl of strong will—so soon controlled her emotions.

When she spoke in reply, she was perfectly calm.

"I am not so sure but what you say is the truth, Nellie. But if you think there's a deeper, more imminent peril to Mr. Spencer than blackening his character, it will be well, maybe, to warn him of it without delay. I only hope he will leave Brooklyn if but for a time," sighed Lillian with feeling. "So long as he remains I feel convinced that he's exposing himself to danger. What would advise, dear Nellie?"

"Will you leave this matter wholly to me, Lillian?" from Nellie, resolutely. "Very well. I shall see Cyril myself and talk it over with him—warn him, too, of Merrivale's purpose to ruin him—and rest assured, as Cyril is at heart good and sensible, he will do what you advise. I know, Lillian, you are watched by the agents of this man Merrivale, so it will be as well that I see Cyril personally, also discover if there's any truth at all in the operator's stories. As to myself, I believe Merrivale's accounts of Cyril's doings are pure inventions."

"I am grateful to you, Nellie, for saying that," replied Lillian, pressing her friend's hand with fervor. "I am doubly blessed in having a wise counselor as well as a sincere friend. Do what you can, Nellie dear—and give Cyril this note which will the more fully explain my wishes in this respect."

For some time it had dawned upon Miss Kingsley that whenever she left the Kingsley mansion she was followed, and also was she aware that this espionage was done by more than one person.

At first this did not give Lillian much concern, but when it went on day after day, she took Nellie Beckwith into her confidence and that young lady set to work to discover who her friend's "shadowers" were.

Four days of sedulous watching informed Miss Beckwith that the "shadows" were employes of a private detective agency in the pay of Mr. Merrivale.

This much accomplished, Nellie Beckwith endeavored to obtain a deeper insight into Merrivale's methods and ultimately discovered why Lillian was watched.

It was to prevent Miss Kingsley from meeting Cyril Spencer and to blacken the latter's character as much as possible.

"Two good women are worth a dozen bad men," was Nellie's comment. "And if we can't outwit Merrivale in his double role of spy and villifier, then I'll surrender and own that his cunning is superior to feminine subtlety."

That night between nine and ten, Miss Beckwith stole by a private way from the Kingsley mansion and bent her steps toward the Wall Street Ferry.

The evening was muggy and for a wonder very few people were about as she reached the "bridge," from the railings of which she could see the Ferry House and the busy river with its throb of machinery and rapidly flitting lights.

Here she waited for several minutes, her eyes following the tugs and ferry boats as they crossed and recrossed in each other's paths, and the now somewhat indistinct lights from the skyscrapers which seemed to rise out of some shadowy abyss on the farther side of the river.

While engaged thus in fascinating reverie, a hand was laid gently on Nellie's shoulder and a not unmusical voice said:

"I'm sorry I couldn't be here sooner, Miss Beckwith. The truth is I was followed and had to give my follower the slip. How did I manage it? Why in this way—going in one door of a public building and out the other. No doubt my man's still there, hoping against hope that I will show up. But he'll find himself nicely fooled, as he deserved to be," laughed the speaker quietly.

"Mr. Spencer! I'm glad you succeeded in outwitting your shadow. But are you sure that you've not been followed here?" questioned Nellie, a little nervously.

"Sure? Perfectly," replied Cyril Spencer cheerfully. "Ever since last week I've been going through the Borough with eyes and ears open—knowing well what would be the outcome if I didn't. Forewarned they say is forearmed—and as I've been forewarned, I'm consequently forearmed. I'm most careful now of even going to the postoffice, fearing that some spy will be on my track. I don't care much for myself," Cyril added thoughtfully, "but I should hate to compromise another—one especially who is my very life and soul. You have a letter for me, Miss Beckwith?"

"I have."

"From Lillian?"

"Yes. Do you think you can read it here? Is there light enough?" the young woman asked.

"Oh, ample. Besides, my eyes are genuine X-rays—like a cat that can see in the dark. But truly, Miss Beckwith, my eyes are the best part of me—they've the power of an Indian's or a South African's, and they, you know, are gentlemen who can see everything except their own faults," the young man added with a merry laugh.

"I'm so glad you're in such good spirits," said Nellie Beckwith. "Do you know I like you very much, Mr. Spencer—and should hate to see you come to any harm. And if you stay in Brooklyn you will," she added naively.

"I see it's Miss Kingsley's wish that I leave for a while," replied Cyril in a tone of bitter disappointment. "Well, so be it," he went on bravely, after reading the note. "I will do exactly as she wishes. I know it's for my own good. I know that foes are on my trail—and this I also know," he added with profound tenderness, "that while I'm here, Miss Kingsley herself's in danger and you know, Miss Beckwith, I would sacrifice my life to add to her happiness."

"I know that, Mr. Spencer," said Nellie, grasping the young man's hand with a fervid pressure. "I know you truly love Lillian and something has always told me that you are worthy of her, in spite of the scandalous stories that that Wall street man has been circulating."

"Do you allude to Merrivale?" asked Cyril excitedly.

"Yes, I allude to Merrivale. The reports he's been circulating about you are something awful—and if one didn't know you better, one would be apt to believe them. Now listen to me, Cyril—and please bear in mind that I like you," pursued Nellie earnestly. "I like you because Lillian loves you; but I should like to say one thing—if you have formed acquaintances among men who drink and gamble——"

"Drink and gamble," repeated the young man pained and surprised at what he heard. "Your words take my breath away, Miss Beckwith. Whoever told you I drank or gambled? On my word of honor as a man, Miss Beckwith, I don't know the first thing about cards, nor anything whatever about games of chance. As for liquor, I have yet to know the taste of it—it has never passed my lips, and I hope it never shall. Who has been spreading these reports?"

"Merrivale."

"I thought so," replied Cyril, thoughtfully. "And yet," he went on, in a musing strain, "there is still a mystery—a mystery that must be cleared. Miss Beckwith, I see it all now! I've heard within the last day or two that I've a double somewhere in Brooklyn and that he does many of the queer things that are attributed to me. Hush!" suddenly exclaimed the young man nervously pressing the girl's hand. 'Look! There is the double of which I spoke!"

At that moment there staggered into the light of the street-lamp, a young man strikingly resembling Cyril Spencer!

CHAPTER VII.

RED A BORROWER AT FARMER SHINER'S.

To return to Red after dragging Bertram's body among the trees.

The approaching footsteps had at first alarmed him, but he saw the owner, so instead of concealing himself he drew his slouch hat over his brows and went boldly to meet the newcomer—a sturdy countryman, honesty stamped in every line of his jolly, good-natured face.

Men of this class as a rule are very unsuspicious, believing every one to be as good and as honest as themselves. They are invariably, too, men of courage and it takes something out of the ordinary to alarm them, so that when Red greeted the stranger with a "good night" the countryman returned his greeting heartily.

This brought on the conversation Red was anxious for.

"I'm a stranger in these parts," explained Red. "Perhaps you could enlighten me on a certain point though. Are you a farmer?" asked the ex-convict taking in the general appearance of the man.

"Yes, that's just what I am," replied the other with a smile. "I own a farm half a dozen miles from here."

"Too far for my business," said Red in a friendly tone, "and maybe you wouldn't have what I am after anyhow?"

"If it's a fair question, what's that?"

"I'm after a covered wagon."

"A canvas covered wagon, eh?"

"Yes. Can you direct me to where I can get one? I'm willing to pay a good price for the favor," said Red.

"I haven't one myself," returned the farmer with the utmost frankness. "But I can direct you to where you can get one."

"Is it far?"

"About a mile."

"That will do. Owned by a farmer, eh?"

"Yes, a man named Shiner. But I may tell you this much," cautioned the stranger, "if you haven't Shiner's price, better not call. In money matters Shiner's a stickler, though in other ways he's as obliging a feller as you could meet."

"Thank you," said Red, with what he meant to be a gracious smile. "I think I can satisfy Mr. Shiner—guess I'll call on him. On this road you say?"

"Yes, about a mile as straight as you can go—the third farm house you meet. It's about forty paces off from the road."

"Thank you, again, sir," said Red. "It looks as if it was going to clear up."

The farmer glanced at the sky.

"Yes, it did seem as if we were going to have a slight change. But the clouds are rolling west and the moon and stars are coming out. Don't forget—the third homestead you come to," the farmer emphasized—"the owner's name's Shiner. Good night!"

"Good night, and much obliged," from Red and as the jolly countryman pursued his way to town, the ex-convict struck out for Mr. Shiner's farm.

"I'm glad I met that chap," said Red. "Reckon Master Shiner will lose his wagon this blessed night. I calculate he may whistle for the price of its hire. The only trouble 'll be the dogs—drat them! I forgot to ask about the canines. Hello! here he comes back!"

This ejaculation was caused by Red's suddenly hearing the countryman coming up behind at a trot.

"Hello! Hello! Stop!" roared the voice of the farmer.

"What the devil does he want now? I hope he hasn't taken it into his turniphead that I'm anything but honest," growled the ex-convict impatiently, "I've fixed one tonight. I don't want to give the same dose to a second."

Red stopped and turned.

"What's up?" he asked. "Forgotten anything?"

"Yes, I forgot to warn you of the dogs."

Red started.

"Yes?" he said quietly. "What about them?"

"This Shiner has two of the most savage brutes in this county—Snarl and Yarl. Steer clear of these critters, or they may tear you to pieces."

"That's not so pleasant," replied Red visibly shuddering. "Snarl and Yarl do you call them?"

"Yes, that's their names. Here you are—something in this package—take it along. When you reach the house just whisper, 'Snarl—Yarl,' and throw them what's in the parcel and you'll have no trouble. They won't even bark at you."

"Well," spoke Red with some feeling, "you've put yourself to a great deal of trouble; and upon my word, I can't thank you sufficiently."

Without further words the farmer turned and walked back. Red's eyes followed him curiously for a second or two, then he resumed his journey.

"Well, hang me, if I understand that feller," he muttered dubiously. "But no doubt he means to serve me," he added a moment later. "A stranger, too—the world's a darned sight better than I thought. Snarl and Yarl? Couldn't be named more appropriately. And this is the parcel to do the trick."

Red was curious to see what the parcel contained. When the farmer had vanished he opened it.

"Dog biscuit. Well, I'll be ——! Guess that hayseed has the laugh on me. Never mind; I'll try 'em with it. It can't do no harm, if it does no good."

And on Red went.

The night was quite bright now and Red counted the farm houses as he passed along the road.

"The third," he thought. "This will be Shiner's to the right there."

The farm house stood back from the highway between thirty and forty paces. The buildings and offices were reached by a lane, which Red did not relish going up until he made sure that nobody was about.

Then he stole quietly toward the house. There was no light in any of the windows, proof enough to Red that the Shiner family had retired and no doubt were soundly sleeping at that moment.

"I'll get along all right if Snarl and Yarl will act decent," figured the ex-convict. 'It may be that the biscuits 'll work a charm. We'll soon see. If the dogs kick up a row, I'll have to settle them, that's all." Red didn't say what he was going to settle them with—unless he meant the loaded bludgeon he carried. He couldn't very well use the pistol which he had taken from Bertram. This would make too much noise and so defeat his purpose. He must try what he could do with the dogs, anyhow.

Red now passed through the gate which led into the farm yard. As a precaution he left the gate open. He guessed where the wagon would be, he knew where to get the horses to hitch to it, and once he got back into the road he had no fear of the outcome.

Before Red got to the barn which was in the rear of the house, he had pacified Snarl and Yarl with the contents of the little parcel. So far he had met success; and now for the team and wagon. He found the latter at the back (canvas covered as he expected), then he went to the stables.

In less than five minutes Red had the horses harnessed and hitched to the wagon. Two minutes later he got them into the road.

"Turned out better than I expected," muttered the ex-convict.

He mounted to the driver's seat and was about sitting when the raising of a window sash arrested him.

Red looked back at the house. It was only two stories and at an open window of the second story, a red bewhiskered face appeared.

"Hoi! Hello! Where be ye goin' with that wagin?" came the voice from the bewhiskered one.

Red knew it to be Shiner's.

"Hoi! Hello, yourself! Where do you think I'm going?" replied Red with a laugh.

"That be my wagin!" roared the bewhiskered man.

"I'm not saying it isn't, stupid," roared back Red. "It was yours yes, but it's mine now. Good night, Mister Polish—I mean, Shiner. When I'm through, I'll return it or leave it in town. How will that suit you?"

"Stop—stop!" yelled Shiner again.

Just as the crack of Red's whip smote the air, the farmer discharged a shotgun point-blank at him. The report of the firearm made a fearful din, and as it evidently had not been discharged for some time, it had an effect that Shiner little expected. It recoiled with such force that the farmer with a prolonged yell disappeared.

Not waiting to see what else occurred Red drove the wagon at a breakneck speed down the road. Having no doubt that Shiner would set out in pursuit the moment he got over his trouble added greater celerity to his flight.

Meeting no obstructions on the way the ex-convict finally drew up at the wood into which Porter and Lumley had been ambushed.

The leader of the band and three of his men were awaiting him at this point.

"You've been a devil of a time! What detained you?" grumbled the chief.

Red invented a story that suited his case very well, besides redounding to his credit, though there wasn't a word of truth in the entire account.

"Where did you leave Bertram?"

"He ran when the firing commenced."

This was part of the story invented by Red, who said after running great personal risk to get the wagon, he was attacked by half a dozen farm laborers beside the farmer who owned it. All were armed with shotguns and the moment the battle began Bertram took to his heels and made himself scarce.

"The first time that I ever knew Bertram was a coward," said the Captain, reflectively.

"Nothing surprising in that," said Red coolly. "Bertram was panicky and 'beat it,' that's all. They fired a volley after him, but whether he was hit or not I don't know. I had enough work to get the wagon here as I did."

"Liar!" exclaimed a low, vibrant voice that came from the darkness of the trees.

"Ha!" cried the outlaw leader. "Who said 'liar'?" He turned instantly toward

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where he thought the voice came. "Who called 'liar'?" he repeated looking sternly at the men.

Red's rubicund visage turned a livid green. Had the outlaws observed this they would have suspected that Red's story was a lie—cut from the whole cloth; but instead they went searching among the trees to discover who had uttered the word which gave the ex-convict time to collect himself.

"I'd like to know who tried that game on us," said the Captain grimly. "If I caught him I'd make an example of him he wouldn't be apt to forget."

Red, though in a way superstitious, didn't think that there was anything supernatural in this mysterious voice from the timber. It struck him that it was nothing but a trick played by some member of the band. The voice in nowise resembled Bertram's he decided, and for that matter what had he to fear from a man who lay dead in the tangled undergrowth a mile at least away from them. Besides, they would never be able to prove that he had caused Bertram's death.

Many weeks must elapse before Bertram would even be found—unless, indeed, by accident, an accident which was not likely to occur.

"Say, Cap," said Red, "if you want to get these fellows away tonight—that is before the farmer and his men come along, we'd better move more lively."

"What's the time?" asked the chief.

"I've no watch, but it must be close on two," replied Red.

"Liar!" again repeated the voice from the timber.

Captain Darkkurst scowled darkly and demanded if any man was practicing ventriloquism at his expense.

"That's not ventriloquism," averred one of the outlaws.

"How do you know? Have you practiced it?" asked Darkhurst.

"Yes—and failed. But, Cap, I can swear that that came from no human voice," solemnly declared the man.

Human voice!

Red took instant alarm as this was said.

"Let's get away from here," he cried, shaking in every limb. It's foolish wasting time. It must be two or very near it."

One of the band consulted a large, old-fashioned silver watch. A ray of moonlight fell upon its white face, lighting it up.

"Five minutes after two," announced the fellow who owned the watch. "Do any of you believe in ghosts?" he asked a moment later with undisguised nervousness.

"Why?" asked Darkhurst apparently annoyed at the question.

"Because I do," the man answered with a shiver. "That voice sounded like Bertram's."

"No more than the bray of an ass is like the note of a nightingale," retorted Darkhurst, with grim humor. "We've no time to waste on such rot as ghosts and goblins. Away with you"—to the owner of the watch—"and tell them to bring along Porter and Lumley at once."

When the man had departed on his errand Red felt greatly relieved by his absence. The mere mention of Bertram's name now was harrowing to the ex-convict's soul.

And there was another possibility—a remote one to be sure—which made him tremble like an aspen—the possibility that Bertram was still living!

CHAPTER VIII.

MADGE WILKES TURNS THE TABLES.

Three nights before the Kingsley murder, between the hours of ten and eleven, a woman dressed in black and with her face well hidden in the folds of a heavy veil, alighted at the D—— railway station.

The woman was the only passenger who got off the train.

She waited two minutes before leaving the platform, as though expecting some one; and it was soon apparent from her incoherent mutterings that she was disappointed.

She paced the platform fully a dozen times, then stopped, stamping with impatience.

"Not here yet and won't be," the woman muttered disappointedly. "My wire has been misunderstood. I might have known it."

She was on the point of leaving the station and going into the town, when a roughly dressed, middle aged man accosted her.

This person had approached almost unseen from the waiting room, which was just across from where the woman stood. Hearing his steps she looked up.

"'D-a-r-k-h-u-r-s-t'," spelled the newcomer, without the least hesitation.

"Yes," the woman answered, "and 'B-l-a-c-k T-h-i-r-t-e-e-n';" the words and letters sounding strangely muffled from behind the veil, but the man heard and understood. Then he resorted to his spelling method again.

"'M-a-d-g-e'."

"Quite correct," she replied, sweeping aside her thick veil. "Thought there had been some mistake—that my message had been misunderstood."

"The train was late," the man complained, "and being up last night I was drowsy and went to sleep. What's the time?"

Madge took out her watch and looked at it.

"Twenty-five after ten," she replied.

"Is that all?" the man returned, surprised. "Thought I'd been snoozing a couple of hours at least. Glad I didn't make such a fool of myself, or there'd a been the devil to pay."

"Darkhurst?"

"Yes, madam, Darkhurst—a hard and fast disciplinarian. It would have been as good as my life's worth not to have met you. Hope, madam, you won't say anything. It wasn't my fault; it was the schedule time and my unlucky drowsiness."

"That's all right," Madge snapped. "I won't say anything to Darkhurst; you may rest assured. Have you a conveyance at hand," she asked, "or are we to trudge to the Captain's domicile afoot?"

"It's all right, madam, I've a carriage—unless some one has swiped it," he sheepishly added. "What with drowsiness, the train being late, and a dozen other things, I question if I'm not still asleep. Queer feeling, ma'am, isn't it?"

"Let me convince you that you are wide awake," said Madge harshly.

The thick veil was still off Madge's face and as the light of the station lamp fell upon it, it disclosed the features of a woman on the shady side of fifty, unprepossessing and sinister, with a gloomy, drooping scowl at the corners of a mouth that betrayed much force as well as vindictiveness. The small, black eyes also indicated that Madge was a woman of the most violent temper, stern and unyielding as Fate itself.

"Let me convince you how wakeful you are," repeated Madge, slightly varying her previous words.

The look of a tigress came into those snappy, fierce eyes, as she clutched the man's shoulder and made him cry out:

"Don't—don't! You're tearing my flesh like red-hot pincers. Stop it—stop it!"

"You've felt my talons, eh?"

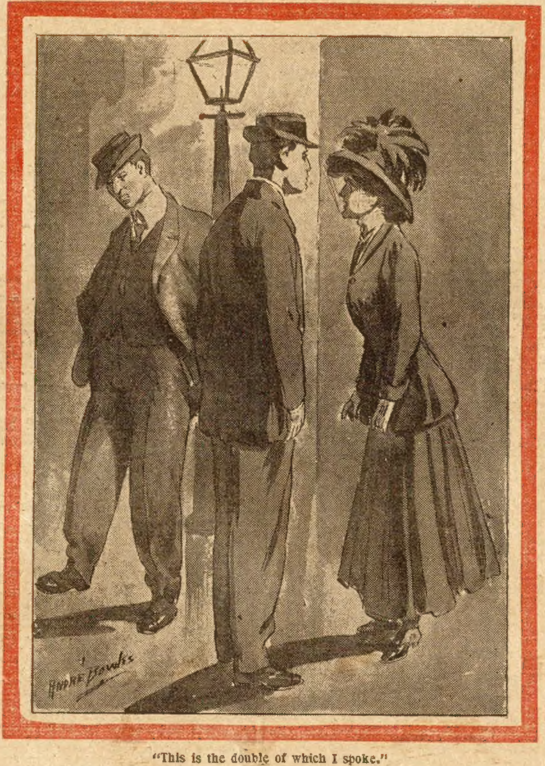
"Yes—yes! I've had enough! Let go!" the man gasped in pain.

"Guess you're pretty wide awake now," snarled his tormentor. "Get that carriage at once."

The man glared at Madge as if he could have eaten her or struck her a blow with his fist. But there was a look in the woman's eyes that made him only mutter: "D—— tiger cat! Infernal tiger cat!"

Feeling his arm to convince himself that the flesh wasn't torn from his bones, he turned and led the way out of the station. Madge followed with a malicious smile on her repellent face.

Outside were two strong-looking horses harnessed to a coupe.



"This is the double of which I spoke."

"They are wide awake, I see," said Madge with emphasis. She made no further remark, but got into the coupe and soon the vehicle was rolling up the main street of the town. They had got within a minute's drive of the outskirts, when the woman stopped the conveyance.

"How much farther?" she demanded impatiently.

"A mile and a half," sulkily from the driver.

"Go on!"

And again she settled back in the carriage, while the driver applied his whip to his horses—not that they didn't go fast enough, but that he could not forget the she-fiend in the coupe. He was angry with himself, angry with her and angry with his team. But as he couldn't just then vent his spite on Madge, he flagellated the sides of the poor dumb brutes until they fairly flew. The man's thoughts had driven him into a dangerous mood. At last they got so far the better of him that he was powerless to resist them.

"D—— tiger cat!" he kept saying to himself. "Infernal tiger cat! She would treat me as if I was a dog—a common cur—because I took that bit of a snooze and kept her waiting. I don't believe her word. She will tell the whole truth to Darkhurst and add to it and what will be the result? I might as well face the devil as face the Captain in one of his angry moods! I never felt so like doing murder! I'd better get rid of the she-devil before worse comes of it."

The driver had been gradually working himself into a murderous passion.

Madge was far from guessing her danger, but something like suspicion flashed upon her at last. They had left the outskirts of D—— far behind. Still the coupe went at a furious rate. Trees and fences swept by with the rapidity of light. Long stretches of timber came into view. In a moment or two they also were passed, and still the coupe went on at a breakneck speed. They were going farther and farther into the country. The night was almost pitch dark. The vehicle rolled from side to side of the road and threatened every moment to be ditched.

"Stop!" at last came from Madge's shrill, imperative voice. But the driver gave no heed; he seemed rather to have increased the speed at which they were traveling. The woman for the first time grew alarmed.

"Stop! Stop!" she shouted at the top of her voice.

The driver turned in his seat.

"Yes, I'll stop now," he replied in an awful voice. "Guess you've reached your journey's end, old lady."

"Old lady!"

This, indeed, was a cue to the driver's purpose. With a sudden jolt which nigh threw Madge from her seat, the vehicle suddenly stopped. The horses were quivering and breathing hard. Their sides were covered with sweat and rime; their limbs trembling under them.

They were now in a wood through which the road led, and no doubt half a dozen miles from any habitation.

"Yes, old lady," said the driver, springing from the box into the road. "You've arrived at your destination. So get out!"

If Madge was alarmed at the man's sinister manner she didn't show it—rather the opposite.

"I see no house," said she calmly; "and we're in a forest, are we not?"

"Yes, we're in a forest, madam. I'll trouble you to alight."

The driver's face was distorted and furious. Not so his words. They were calm and placid—therefore the more dangerous his mood.

Madge never moved.

The driver waited for a moment or two, then said roughly:

"Did you hear what I said, madam? Alight!"

"But Darkhurst is not to be found here," demurred Madge, not moving from her seat.

"I am quite aware of that, madam. I told you to get out—get out! This, you know, is the end of your journey. You won't see Captain Darkhurst tonight, tomorrow night, nor the next night. Come, old girl, out with you! It's getting late and I want to get back."

"You're going to leave me here, are you?" snapped Madge vindictively.

"That will depend," with maddening coolness from the driver. "It's not likely I'll leave you in the middle of the road," he laughed harshly. "You might be found too soon—see?"

"Are you mad?"

"No, sane—perfectly sane, madam. If you don't get out I'll have the disagreeable task of helping you. So alight—alight, I say! One word's as good as a hundred and conveys just as much meaning."

"What! Do you mean to murder me, you ruffian?" exclaimed Madge.

"Come, old girl, just be a little more choice in your language and it may fare easier with you. Are you coming or not?"

The driver took a couple of steps forward, the butt of his whip was poised threateningly.

"Are you coming or not?" he repeated with a savage oath. "If you don't alight I'll crack your she-devil skull with the whip! I suppose you know what this is for," he furiously went on, "so give no more guff, but get out, get out, get out!"

The inflection of his voice grew higher and fiercer as he rolled out the words.

The man and woman couldn't see each other's faces very well in that shadowy, dark spot. But there are times when even the darkness will not hide the repulsive passions of the human countenance, when rage and murder are their dominating features. The woman, Madge—the Madge Wilkes to whom we have alluded earlier—could see that the driver meant to murder her and yet she didn't seen to realize that her last hour had come. As the man came toward her with his upraised whip she arose from her seat, laughed lightly and sprang into the road.

Madge did more. She shoved the muzzle of a revolver into the driver's face, and, without the least excitement said:

"You are a fool; you are playing with edged tools; drop that whip."

The driver caught sight of the death-dealing weapon and the nervy hand that held it and wilted.

"Why should I drop the whip?" he whined. "I was only joking."

"I know. Drop the whip," came quietly from the woman's firm lips. "I'll give you just six seconds. If you still hold the whip when I say 'six,' I'll fire—and a bit of lead goes right through your brain."

Madge got as far in her count as 'five,' when the driver relaxed his grasp on the whip and it fell into the road.

"You've saved your life," said Madge Wilkes quietly. "Now we understand each other. You were angered by my treatment at the railway station, so brought me here to murder me. You needn't deny it or call it a jest or anything of the sort, for that cuts no figure with a woman of my kind. Your murderous instincts have been foiled—well, what of it? Don't you see that I hold the whip hand? Now pick it up at once"—peremptorily—"and mount to your seat. This affair goes no further. Darkhurst will never learn of it. Now drive back again and get to the house. I'm not your enemy—I'm your friend!"

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Old Aunt Miasma—Howdy, Gladys! Howdy, chile! I yeahs tell dat yo' am uh-gwine to marry dat 'ar Cla'ence Swagg?

Miss Gladys Guggles—Yes'm! Me and Cla'ence is gwine to sasshay fo'th hand in hand on de stawmy sea o' mat'imony. De obsequies 'am fixed for next Friday evenin', and I's as happy as de day is long, right now!

Old Aunt Miasma—Uh-huh! Well, I admires to see yo' 'joyin' de pangs of anticipation and I sho'ly hopes de retaliation will be de same. But—ah, Lawd!—dese men, dese men! I's done been mar'd to no less'n five o' de scoun'rels in muh time, gal, and yo' can't place no mo' oppendence on 'em dan so many eels, dey's dat determ[illegible] slippery! Dey talks and dey transplavicates, and sw'ars by de moon and stahs dat dey'll be true, but when yo' thinks yo' has 'em—Bim!—and dey's gone fum yo'! Woman was made to moan, and man was made to see dat she moan. U-m-m-m-ah!

Miss Gladys Guggles—Yas'm! I organizes right smaht 'bout dat muhse'f, uhkaze I's done been fooled dat-uh-way a few times a'ready. I had muh doubts o' Cla'ence, 'spite-uh his protoplams of undyin' 'fection, twell he took and jammed muh head against de wall wid a ferocity dat jarred de house, and den I knowed de man r'ally loved me. Yas'm, den I knowed it.—Puck.

"Paw, what is the 'great white plague' the papers talk about?" asked Johnny.

"A big snowstorm, my son," answered his father wearily resuming the task of trying to find his front sidewalk.

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35 YEARS OLD.

Published Every Saturday
—BY—
W. D. BOYCE CO.

All communications should be addressed to
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112, 114 DEARBORN ST.,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Single subscriptions to the Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. If not paid in advance, $2.00 a year, $1.00 for six months. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express Money Order, payable to The Chicago Ledger. Subscription price in Canada. $1.50 a year.

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The more justice some men get the more they don't want.

Wisdom is merely common sense in an uncommon degree.

If the wife is a bad cook the husband is apt to be a good roaster.

Wise is the woman who wears a muzzle on her gossip department.

Some men are worthless—and some others are not worth that much.

If it wasn't for the fool and his money lots of wise guys would starve.

Never climb a mountain till you come to it—and maybe it won't be there.

Prohibition laws in the South now have to run the gauntlet of the courts.

Love is like the wind—no one knows whence it comes or whither it goes.

In a game of hearts a girl should be willing to let a young man hold her hand.

One man doesn't look good to another unless he has more dollars than sense.

A man whom the world calls great may be but a small potato in the eyes of his wife.

Probably nothing makes a girl so angry as the failure of some other girl to notice her new engagement ring.

A New York physician wants society to fly kites for its health. Anything at all so it isn't a useful occupation.

A married woman's advice to men: When in doubt, listen to your wife; if not in doubt, listen to her anyway.

If you are too lazy to open the front door when fortune rings the bell, don't expect her to go to the back door and knock.

A New Jersey man has come out of a trance. Some illustrious Presidential candidates should follow his modest example.

For the next few weeks the New York papers will consist of the picture of Evelyn Thaw and a few roasts on the President.

We can safely say without laying claim to being a prophet that 1908 will be the year of the big water on the Ohio River, the same as all other years.

Applause greeted the chaplain of the Oklahoma Legislature when he prayed for Bryan. They certainly can think of original things to do in Oklahoma.

Her Fateful Marriage

By ANNIE BROWNLEE

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CHAPTER XI.
THE ANGEL OF DEATH.

The night wears on. The long, weary hours drag their way slowly towards the dawn. The wind sighs softly, slowly the silver streak of coming day paints the tree tops and the gables of the old Grange with its golden tints.

The brightness of a new day bursts upon a world that is throbbing with life and activity. But the golden sunshine falls upon a baby face that lies white and still upon its mother's breast, and the chilliness of December strikes her young heart and almost stops its beating.

Her child—her baby has gone from her forever!

She kneels beside the little white draped cot, where the sweet baby form has been laid, her wild tearless eyes glued to the lovely little face that is so calm and still and painless now, and she wrings her hands and cries:

"He is only sleeping! That is not death! It can't be death! My baby would not leave me—alone!"

With gentle hands and pitying words, her friends try to soothe her and draw her from the room, but in vain.

For hours she kneels there, deaf to all sympathies or entreaties, and it is only when mercifully unconscious that she is taken from the room.

The house is hushed and still. In one of the upper rooms the baby form lies white and motionless, with flowers piled high upon its spotless bed. The dear baby face is there, from whose angelic beauty all trace of earth and pain has fled, in whose presence all grief is silenced, and tears forget to flow.

Lady Althea and Mrs. Duncan often steal into the quiet chamber and gaze at the little body lying so calmly, so peacefully there. As they look on the exquisite face, on which death has left no shadow of fear, no trace of suffering, a vague sense of comfort steals over their souls, that death can be so calm, so peaceful, so beautiful.

As they stand looking at the earthly tenement of the lovely infant, a soft step comes along the corridor, and enters the doors. It is Grace, the sorrow-stricken mother. She goes straight to the little bier and stands looking down at the figure that once made life worth living to her.

As they see the awful tearless agony on the mother's face, they are moved to tears and deepest pity. They can feel something of the loss, the desolation, the despair, through which she must go ere comfort is reached. When every child's voice will stab her aching heart like a knife, when the sight of a little shoe, a broken toy, will bring back the memory of her loss. Alas! Alas! for the life, who amidst the storms and sorrows of the world clings but to one joy, then sees it suddenly dashed away, and in the future sees no ray of light, no star of hope, all is blank and desolate, and only despair remains.

Another day dawns, and the little body will soon be taken from her and confined to its last resting place.

Soon after breakfast a telegram comes from Mrs. Langdon full of anxious inquiries after the child. Grace reads it and a cold, hard smile curls her lips. She takes a pencil and writes on the back:

"My baby is mine no longer.
"GRACE."

"Dear Althea, will you see that the answer is sent?" she asks, handing the paper to her friend, then she quietly leaves the room.

Lady Althea takes it and reads what is written on both sides of the paper and the tears gather in her eyes and roll down her cheeks.

"How sad and desolate some wives are," she thinks sadly, "and what terrible suffering some are called upon to bear!"

The message is sent at once to Mrs. Langdon. Towards noon a lengthy telegram comes from Sir Richard, and reads as follows:

"Regret to hear of the child's illness, but feel sure you are unnecessarily alarmed. Did I not feel certain that the child is better I would go to you at once. You were always full of fears for the boy, you know.
"RICHARD NEVILLE."

Grace reads it through twice, then hands it to her friends.

"Yes, he is right; the child is better," she says calmly, but there is a sparkle in her eyes they have never seen there before. A hard, peculiar expression settles over her face like a mask. "You will please answer this for me, also, Althea?" with an appealing glance at her friend. "There need be no explanation or details given. They would make tiresome reading, I have no doubt. Merely state what has occurred."

The lonely, heart-broken wife could not help thinking how different Mark Eldon would have acted under like circumstances. Had he been the father of her child, she would not have been left to weep alone for her lost darling. A husband's love and tender sympathy would have supported her through this trying ordeal.

For long hours after that heartless message had reached her, she paces the floor in her own room, only leaving it now and then to look upon the calm, peaceful face of her little dead darling.

While the mother is plunged in deepest sorrow, the father is whispering words of love and devotion into the ear of the Countess.

While the mother stands weeping by the coffin of her little dead child, the father sits by the blue, rippling waters of Naples, a soft white hand clasped lovingly in his, and burning words of love and constancy on his lips. A pair of soft liquid eyes look into his, and he forgets wife and child, and is only conscious of a mad longing to possess the beautiful siren by his side.

"I can never understand how she succeeded in tempting you into such folly. You must have been mad," the siren is whispering softly in his ear.

"You are right, it was folly, mad, unreasonable folly! But I must do her the justice to say she did not tempt me into the marriage—it was her mother did that. Grace never cared for me, and she was honest enough to let me see she did not."

"Oh, to be sure! Your beautiful, accomplished wife could never be otherwise than honest. You are to be congratulated, Sir Richard, on having such a virtuous and honest wife. She could never, for instance, be guilty of unwifely thoughts of another man—not even of Mark Eldon," with a low, mocking laugh.

"Oh, that young fool! She don't care a sixpence for him or any one else; it's not in her nature to do so. But why let us speak of her? You know I hate her, and would give all I possess to be free," he said moodily, tightening his clasp on the slender white fingers.

"Which I fear you never will be. Lady Neville is too shrewd a woman to give you the necessary grounds for divorce. Not that she is any better than the rest of us, but she is more clever in concealing it."

"No, Grace will never give me grounds for a legal separation; yet, I will manage it somehow. If she were only less cold and reserved we might manage it."

"Lady Neville is neither cold or reserved with Mr. Eldon," the Countess says slowly. "I have watched them together. When with him the whole expression of her face changes. I know love when I see it, and Grace and Mark Eldon are lovers, always were and always will be."

"You are sure of that?" Sir Richard asks eagerly. "If I thought——"

"You needn't think anything about it. I am telling you the truth. All London knows that Mark Eldon adores your wife, and it is apparent to all that she is not indifferent to his attentions."

The funeral was long over before Sir Richard returned to the Grange, and then he made but a brief stay. He hated the quiet stillness of the Grange and went yachting with a party of friends.

"There was no use crying over spilt milk," he said philosophically. "Moping to death in that dismal old place would not bring the child back. Of course, if Grace preferred it, he had no objection to her remaining there, but he could not endure the place. He would join a party of friends on a yachting trip for a few weeks."

So Grace was once more left alone in the quiet old Grange. Lady Althea had returned to London, hoping that when Grace was alone Sir Richard would remain with her and that alone with their sorrow, they might grow to know each other better.

Grace's letters were not frequent, but every line was pregnant with grief and despair. Lady Althea read, and her tender heart ached, and she at once decided to run down and see Grace. Such letters could only come from a heart that was broken, a spirit crushed.

One bright autumn day, as twilight was gathering, Lady Althea arrived at the Grange. She had expected to see Grace changed, perhaps thin and pale, but she was shocked at the ravages a few weeks had made on the beautiful face.

Each day her sorrow seemed to grow deeper and more intense. Even all Lady Althea's tenderness and gentle sympathy could not thaw the ice about her heart. All emotions, all tender feelings, seemed chilled and frozen. Lady Althea was puzzled at this new side to her friend's character. There was something in that pale, sad face that spoke not so much of natural grief, as of unnatural restraint. She had something of the expression of one holding the lid tight and dare not let it go. She only half comprehended her in her present state, for she could not know that Grace was filled with a vague terror of herself, now that her safeguard had been swept away. She is like a disabled bark on a stormtossed sea, and can see the jagged rocks just ahead, which mean certain destruction.

Lady Althea stays with Grace all through that dreary winter. She could not bear to leave her alone in her terrible grief and desolation.

The dreary months pass slowly by, but Sir Richard does not come to the Grange. At long intervals a short, curt letter reaches the lonely wife, but he never speaks of coming home. In the society papers they see that he and the Countess of Ruttlen are seen much together. Mrs. Langdon writes freqently, but has never come to the Grange since the death of little Dick. There is something so chilling and formal in Grace's polite replies, that she decides it would be wiser to defer meeting her for the present. Mark Eldon has written again and again, but she has sent him no line. She dare not. His presence, his sympathy, his tender consideration, would have been a dangerous comfort, just now. She longs for a word, a look, yet, she sternly denies herself. She feels that she is not strong enough just yet. She must steer clear of the rocks and shoals; her safety lies in the deep water.

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CHAPTER XII.
FIGHTING AGAINST TEMPTATION.

The cold, dreary months of winter passed and spring, bright and beautiful, spread its green mantle over the world. Sir Richard had written to ask Grace to come to London for the season.

To dance, gossip, entertain and assume all the light frivolousness that society demands, to plunge into fashion, luxury and extravagance! She thought of it all with a sickening horror.

Her youth and all that was brightest and best in her, seemed to have died with her little child. When left alone to brood over her sorrow, that old terrible expression, that had so alarmed Lady Althea, would steal over her face, the look as of tears that would not fall, the fear of self and unnatural restraint.

One day a letter comes from Mark Eldon that arouses Grace out of her present listlessness. The letter is so full of love and sympathy that the great tears well in her eyes and run down her cheeks. At first her heart gives a great glad throb, for it is sweet to be loved by those that are dear to us. But a moment later recollection comes and into her heart steals a great horror of herself, that she could for one moment forget and rejoice in his love.

Lady Althea observes her unusual agitation, but pretends not to notice it.

Presently the eyes are dried, the voice steadied and a look of strong determination steals over her face. She scans her friend's face intently for a few seconds before speaking.

"I am going to ask a great favor of you, Althea. You have been such a staunch friend in the past, I feel I can trust you in the future. Mr. Eldon will be here this afternoon. I cannot see him, I dare not," she said a little hysterically. "If you would see him for me you would confer a lasting favor. If you care to read that letter, it will explain much that I cannot tell you."

She handed Mark Eldon's letter to Lady Althea, then moved to the window, that she might not see the varying expressions on her friend's face.

"Dear Grace," the letter began, "I can see your look of grave displeasure when you receive this letter. But you will forgive me when you remember how lonely I am, how empty my life has been since I lost you. Your recent trouble makes you dearer to me than ever, and the longing to see you grows intolerable. Sometimes I think my reason will leave me if I cannot see your sweet face again. Only the other day I donned hat and coat and started for the station determined to take the first train to the Grange. But a good angel —or sometimes I think it was an evil one— prevented me. I have only to close my eyes and imagine you by my side as in the happy days of old. I can still feel the touch of your hand upon my arm and your voice rings in my ears even yet. I sometimes wonder if there is another voice on earth that can thrill my soul and calm my restless, rebellious heart as yours can. Sometimes when surrounded by gay comrades, and in the midst of reckless dissipation, your sweet face rises before me, and it seems that gentle, loving hands drag the cup from my lips. Then comes reality, and the constant ache at my heart, the unavailing regrets and longings. It is hard, Grace, oh, so hard, to have things thus! I have decided to leave England, but cannot go without seeing you once more. I know what you would say, that it is very wrong, but I have arrived at that stage where I don't care. I must and will see you! I will be at the Grange tomorrow afternoon to bid you farewell. Once again I will clasp your little hands in mine and listen to the voice that is earth's sweetest music to me! I suppose it is very wrong, very wicked for me to speak to you like this now, but somehow my life seems all wrong. But there, I must cease before I say something you might find hard to forgive. You know how selfish, how headstrong, how impulsive I always was, and I fear I have grown more so with years. I will stop right now, and live only in anticipation of seeing you within the next twenty-four hours. Yours now and forever,
"MARK."

Lady Althea read the letter through twice, then sat thoughtful and silent for some minutes. The strange fear she felt for Grace at the time of the child's death

SOME HARD KNOCKS

Woman Gets Rid of "Coffee Heart."

The injurious action of coffee on the heart of many persons is well known by physicians to be caused by caffeine. This is the drug found by chemists in coffee and tea.

A woman suffered a long time with severe heart trouble and finally her doctor told her she must give up coffee, as that was the principal cause of the trouble. She writes:

"My heart was so weak that it could not do its work properly. My husband would sometimes have to carry me from the table, and it would seem that I would never breathe again.

"The doctor told me that coffee was causing the weakness of my heart. He said I must stop it, but it seemed I could not give it up until I was down in bed with nervous prostration.

"For eleven weeks I lay there and suffered. Finally my husband brought home some Postum and I quit coffee and started new and right. Slowly I got well. Now I do not have any headaches, nor those spells with weak heart. We know it is Postum that helped me. The Dr. said the other day, 'I never thought you would be what you are.' I used to weigh 92 pounds and now I weigh 158.

"Postum has done much for me and I would not go back to coffee again for any money, for I believe it would kill me if I kept at it. Postum must be well boiled like the directions on pkg. say, then it has a rich flavour and with cream is fine." Name given by the Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," found in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

came back to her now with ten fold force.

"Well?" Grace says when the silence has become unendurable, "I suppose you condemn me utterly?"

"No," her friend replies. "I pity you unutterably." The expressive eyes are very tender and soft and there is the sound of tears in her voice.

"You will see Mr. Eldon for me then?"

"Yes, dear, I will see him," the other replied.

"You are so good, so kind, I don't know what I should do without you, dear."

"I understand, dear, and I think you have chosen most wisely in refusing to see Mr. Eldon."

"I dare not do otherwise. Oh, Althea you don't know what it is to be tempted as I have been! Had little Dick lived it would have been easy enough to keep in the straight and narrow path! The touch of his little hands about my neck would have been an infallible talisman against evil."

"I know, dear, but you are not so helpless as you imagine. You have great will power and determination, you are not impulsive or hasty. I feel sure you will conquer the temptation, and be nobler and better for having come spotless through this fiery ordeal!"

"I don't know, I hope you are right; but I have a sickening horror of the future. If he would only stay away it would be so much easier to do right."

"Yes, it is unfortunate that he does not. It is very selfish, very unmanly for him to force his presence upon you in such a way."

"You don't understand Mark," Grace hurries to explain. "He is hasty and impulsive, but withal so kind and generous. I sometimes think that no one but myself ever did understand poor Mark."

"Nevertheless, it is despicable for him to place you in such an embarrassing position. He is thoroughly selfish and thinks only of his own sorrow. A true man would have more thought for your feelings."

"I cannot defend him for what he has done, but I love him too well to condemn him utterly," Grace said with a weary sigh. "You are very hard on him. You forget how desolate his life is, how empty, and we were once so much to each other."

"God knows I have no wish to be hard on any one. There is none of us so good but we might be better, or none so bad but we might be worse. No one can judge another's life by their own experience. There are so many different influences in different lives, that it would be utter folly to set any standard by which to judge our fellow creatures. Each one must use the judgment God gave them and be guided by the wee, small voice of conscience, and they will not go far astray."

"But it is so hard to keep in the straight path sometimes. Those who are anchored by love are safe from temptation; but to the anchorless, to those for whom life has no charm, no pleasant prospect to look forward to, they soon fall under the scythe."

"My dear Grace," Lady Althea says very softly, "have you ever noticed on a dull, dreary day, how quickly and unexpectedly the sun will break through the clouds and all is bright and beautiful in God's world again?"

"Ah, I know what you mean, dear, but no sun will ever break through the clouds in my life," she said with a sad, pathetic smile.

CHAPTER XIII.

TEMPTED YET SAVED.

In the drawing room of the Grange Lady Althea paces the floor impatiently. She has been waiting there for the last hour for the arrival of Mark Eldon. She had persuaded Grace to go for a walk in the wood and thereby brought about the very meeting she had planned to prevent.

Grace wandered into the edge of the forest and sat down. She was too heartsore and troubled to enjoy a walk through the beautiful old woods, or to even notice the beauties of nature. She was thinking of the years that were past. Thinking of the time when she was a happy care-free girl, when she and Mark used to chase the butterflies and pick the flowers in just such a beauty spot as this. That was before her mother's worldly ambitions began to interfere with her happiness, before Sir Richard came on the scene, with his title, his wealth, and his princely estates. Before her mother had conceived the idea of setting a price on her head. Then came her engagement to Sir Richard; she could never quite understand that. She had given him no lover's encouragement, never bestowed a happy, trusting smile upon him; yet he would have her for his wife, and as could only be expected of such a marriage, soon tired of her. Then baby came, and for a few months she was happy in the companionship of the child; then the cruelest blow of all fell. Here a lonely desolate sigh escaped her, and the great tears began to roll down her cheeks.

The sound of approaching footsteps roused her. Quickly drying her eyes, she peered curiously through the trees. A stalwart, dark-clad figure was approaching. There was something in the broad shoulders and well poised head that sent a happy flutter to her heart; then, the chill of winter wrapped itself about her, a terrible dumb despair was creeping over her, for the moment paralyzing every faculty.

What horrible fate was planning her destruction? What evil genius was at work to throw her into the clutches of temptation? Oh, for the strength of Samson, that she might arise and flee! Happiness was within her grasp, but at such a cost! She must be strong, she must resist, she must not let his love tempt her out of the path of duty! In the few seconds she stood there watching the advancing figure, those thoughts flashed through her mind.

"My God, Grace!" Mark Eldon cried when he stood before her. "I thought you were safe at the Grange? Why did you not stay there?"

"I did not care to meet you, Mark, so I came out here. Lady Althea was to see you and explain." She was very pale, her voice tremulous.

"My God! And I thought to come here and walk off my mad longing to see you, and fate itself has thrown us together! I regretted my selfishness in compelling you to see me. In one of my better moments I decided not to go near you. I thought I would wander here alone till I could get a train back to London. Leave me, Grace, leave me while the better impulse is upon me, after a while it may be too late!"

"Mark, I can't! Oh, I wish—I wish you had not come! But you will leave me, you will go away? See, I am trembling so I can hardly stand!" she said piteously.

"I vowed I would not go near you. I kept away from the Grange; but you see it was no use. Fate is stronger than you or I, Gracie."

Grace's heart is rent assunder by the fierce pathos of his voice. She sees that her own weakness has wrecked two lives, and now her soul is filled with anguish and with dread.

"I have decided to leave England. The only possibility of peace or forgetfulness for either of us is to put oceans between us," he goes on, leaning his elbow against a tree by her side. "We must be all or nothing to each other; friendship will not suffice. I being desperate and reckless, and you good and pure and womanly, there can be no question of what the result will be.

"Good, and pure, and womanly!" Grace cries with sudden vehemence, the blood surging to her face. "Had I been that I should never have paltered with temptation one single minute! I sinned when I listened to your entreaties to see me again. I should have sent you from me then, and not weakly yielded to temptation. Meeting can only increase our misery. We must part!" But the thought dims her eyes and chills her blood.

"Yes," he replied, very unsteadily, very gravely, "there can be no distance too great to set between our lives. My God! and to think what might have been!"

"Life is largely made up of mistakes," Grace says, weeping. "Had I but known—had I but been strong, how different life would be! Yet, something tells me that time and the knowledge that we have done right will yet bring consolation."

"As far as I am concerned, if I am doing right now, it is from no good motive, I assure you. If by word or look you said, 'stay,' there would be no more parting this side of the grave, Gracie, for you and me."

His voice is very low and quivering with love and restrained passion, but she hears every word and all the wild love and longing, all the tender feelings for the man who should have been her husband, the weariness and emptiness of life seem beating like battering rams against the poor, weak barriers of honor and duty.

"I would give much to be able to say stay," she cries, a great wistfulness in voice and eyes. "But, Mark, think of the tomorrow that would be sure to follow! Sin and remorse would haunt our lives and cheat us of our anticipated happiness. Is life or love worth one's eternal ruin?"

"Love can be no sin," he answers passionately. "My love would last you through life, and through death, of that I am sure. What ever my faults may be, inconstancy is not one of them."

"Right and wrong are set plainly before us, Mark. God knows, I have tried to keep in the straight path, though I have sometimes wandered off. I cannot, I must not forget duty and honor. If I could cast these things aside and think only of our own selfish love, ask yourself, Mark, would your love be what it is now, as constant, as pure?"

"No, it would not," he says thoughtfully. "Though you have made me suffer as man never suffered before, yet, I would not have your honor tarnished by my selfishness. That is why I came to say goodby."

A sudden mist of tears dims her eyes. It seems as if all around grows cold and gray, and an impassable barrier of ice stands between her and any hope of future happiness.

He is standing facing her, white as death, a great anguish and a greater despair in his dark mournful eyes.

She looks up and meets the look of love, anguish and despair, and her heart goes out to him with a sudden wild impulse, that she can neither check or restrain.

"Oh, Mark, tell me what I should do?" she cries. "I cannot bear to see you suffer like this! Oh, Mark, I pray that God will be merciful to us both!"

Her hands are extended towards him, her voice broken and full of unutterable pain.

"If you wish for God's mercy on you, don't talk like that," he cries hoarsely. "I would save you if possible. Reproach me, scorn me, but don't tempt me with your sorrow. Let me go now, while I have the strength, while the good fit is on me. It may not last, you know, and then——"

One long look he takes at the sad, tear-stained face, then takes her hand in his and draws her to him, closer and closer. She trembles like an aspen, but does not resist. Her eyelids droop, her lips quiver.

"May I—kiss you, just once? It will be for the last time," he whispers.

She does not answer him, speech seems to have deserted her. She only remembers that the man she loves is bidding her an eternal farewell.

There comes such a moment of forgetfulness into the lives of all women whose love has been misplaced; otherwise there would be none to fall for love's sweet sake. It is easy enough to be virtuous when we have never been tempted, never tried.

The anguish, the entreaty in her eyes, gladdens, yet dismays him. In this moment he knows that he holds her fate in his hands and she seems so utterly unconscious of it. One tender word, one fond caress, and he knows he could not answer for himself—for her.

It is the critical moment of Mark Eldon's life. All that is best and worst in his nature are warring fiercely; he is wrapped in a flame of temptation that is hard to resist, and threatens to burn away all noble, self-sacrificing thoughts, all good resolves, and is fast stifling the faint whispers of a conscience that pleads for the woman he loves and would save from herself.

It was the one weak moment in an otherwise strong life, and Mark Eldon knew it as such, and his good angel whispered:

"Save her from herself, keep her spotless and pure, unharmed, untainted by the baseness of selfish passion, an object worthy of love, and lovable, as in the glad sweet days of old!"

While these thoughts are flashing through his brain, he gazes into the soulful eyes and reads their unconscious betrayal.

His face pales to the hue of death. He drops her hands and steps back. One long, mournful look he takes at the sweet face that he has grown to love so madly. Then, with a sigh that is almost a groan, he turns and dashes away.

He is frenzied with pain, with love, with a wild longing to return and clasp her in his arms, and to defy the world to part them.

One word, one look, and his strength would have snapped like a reed. He would have cast honor to the winds, and the fair name of the woman he loved would have been dragged through the mire of scandal and shame, and two lives would have dragged out their days in bitter regrets and unavailing remorse.

This interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very startling episodes and situations. Its perusal to the end will highly reward you. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly advised to send in the price of subscription at once. If you do so, we will be glad to send you free one of our splendid King Cameras or any six patterns you may select from our pattern page, or one of our fine woolen shawls. Look at our advertisement of these costly premiums.

Two Souls.

It happened at Galveston.

The stout, florid, iron-gray drummer climbed down from the car beside the tall, thin, absurdly young drummer, and together they climbed the acclivity, crossed the sea wall, and, walking across the pavilion, seated themselves, and, leaning back luxuriously, gazed out across the chaos of tumbling waters which, foaming and tumbling in indistinct bottle green masses in the distance as they approached the shore, formed themselves into phalanx upon phalanx of combing billows which, rushing up the shelving beach, burst in thunder against the sea wall.

"Doesn't the sight of these mighty waters forming and throwing themselves against the shore only to be beaten back, then reforming and rushing forward again, and again and again, forever and forever, day in and day out, through the lifetime of the world, fill your soul with poetry?" queried the young man.

"Eh, what say?"

"I say doesn't the thunder of the surf, now growling in defeat, now thundering in a renewed effort, in a never-ending attack that shall go on and on through our lifetime, the lifetime of our children and of our children's children until the end of time—I say doesn't the mighty voice of the waters fill your soul with poetry?"

"Huh! How's that?"

"I say is not the majestic sweep of the waters rushing shoreward like an army of millions of whitemaned steeds the very poetry of motion? Is not the voice of the waters vying with the thunders of the heavens the very voice of poetry?"

The stout man sat still for a moment as if in thought, then rising, tapped the young man on the shoulder and led the way across the sea wall down the declivity, two blocks straight into the city and around a corner.

"Now," said he, "say it again; those rotten waves made so damned much noise I couldn't hear a word you said."

Eastern Sportsman (in frontier camp)—Any game here?

Resident (sadly)—Nawthun but poker.

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"Well, your honor," he replied to the usual question, "I guess I'm guilty, all right. But say, what's a tunnel for?"

Ideal and Actual.

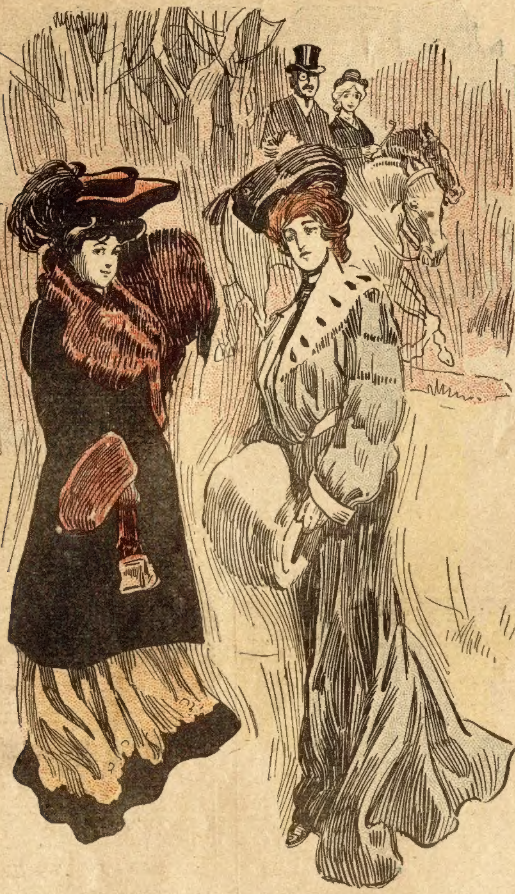
Shoe Store Salesman—What size would you like, madam?

Miss Larjun—I'd like a No. 2, but there's no use talking about that. You may as well show me your No. 5s.

A Time-Honored Custom.

Indignant Maiden—What did you mean, sir, by trying to kiss me?

Audacious Youth (who was going to pop)—Business. It is customary to sample goods before bidding for them.



"You say they're from New York?"
"Yes."
"Are they in the '400'?"
"Oh, my, no; they're too respectable for that!"

No Chance for Energy.

Northerner (down South)—There are plenty of chances to make money in this section, if you only look for them. Take this town for example. The water of your antiquated wells and cisterns isn't fit to drink.

Colonel Sunnysouth—I know it, but what kin we do? The Prohibs about here won't let us start breweries.

His Time at Hand.

"Daddy, tell us a ghost story."

"I ain't in the ghost business."

"Well," piped a youngster, "you will be shortly, fer we just heard mammy say she wuz goin' to wear you to a frazzle!"

AGENTS WANTED

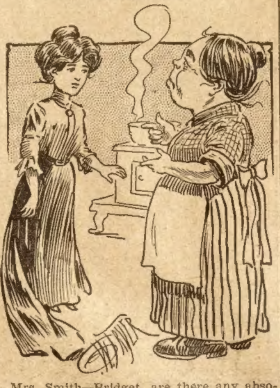
Nearly all the readers of THE LEDGER will find these advertisements of interest to them. There will be found among them some excellent chances of making money by selling goods to friends, neighbors and others. Those seeking such an opportunity either as a regular or temporary occupation, should write the advertisers whose offers follow.

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES to men with rigs to introduce poultry compound. Year's contract. IMPERIAL MFG. CO., DEPT. 1 PARSONS, KANS.

ROLLED GOLD SPECTACLES
GIVEN AWAY
Send No Money
Just write me your name and address and I will mail you my Perfect Home Eye Tester and Rolled Gold Spectacle Offer, absolutely Free.
Dr. Haux Spectacle Co., Bldg. St. Louis, Mo.
I WANT AGENTS ALSO
NOTE.—The Above Firm is Perfectly Reliable.

When answering advertisements you will favor the advertiser and the publishers by mentioning The Chicago Ledger.

Nowadays.



Mrs. Smith—Bridget, are there any absolute necessities that you want for the kitchen?

Bridget—Yis, mum. Oi want a plush rockin' chair, an' some pilloys fer the cozy corner.

The Truth for Once.

The resolute parent stood with the uplifted slipper.

"Johnny," he exclaimed, sternly, "this hurts me more than it does you."

And for once the resolute parent was right. The slipper was two sizes too small for him and he had six corns and a bunion.

TICKLISH

Doing Better Work.

An extremely beautiful, but somewhat vain little girl, the daughter of a very homely father, was admiring herself in the mirror.

"Mama," she said, as she studied her features, "did God make papa?"

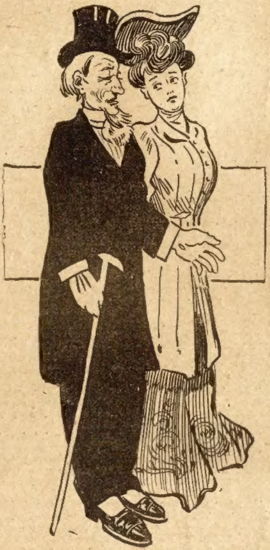
"Yes, daughter," answered the mother.

"And did He make me, too?" asked the child.

"Yes."

"Well, I see he is doing better work here lately," concluded the little girl.

Explained.



Ethel—Uncle, they say that there are more marriages of blondes than of brunettes. Why is it, I wonder?

Uncle Singleton—H'm! Naturally the light-headed ones go first.

The Proper Term.

Knox—You and Dr. Jones are partners, are you not?

Dr. Smith—Oh, no. We often consult together and attend to each other's patients in case of absence, but we are in no sense partners.

Knox—I see. He is what might be termed your accomplice.

"Mrs. Talkington is a truthful woman even though the truth sometimes hits her hard."

"How is that?"

"When her husband died she had 'At Rest' carved on his tombstone."

THE ONLY WAY.

If you would carve a glorious name,
  Where it could shine ever after
High up in the hall of fame—
  Get after
  Some grafter.

If you would catch the crowd's applause
  And hear it ring from floor to rafter,
Denounce some breaker of the laws—
  Get after
  Some grafter.

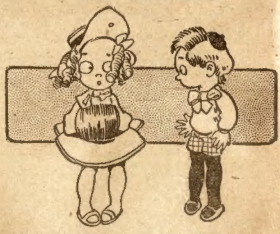
Probably Prejudiced.

"What is the charge against Sharpun?" asked Raynor.

"Conduct unbecoming a lawyer," answered Shyne.

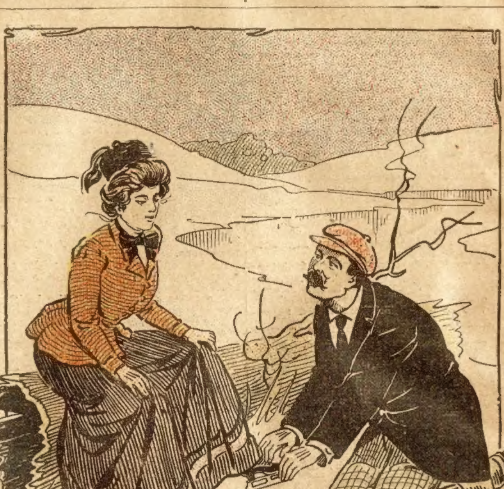
"Great Scott! How can a man possibly be guilty of that?"

True Affection.



Ethel—Jimmy, do you love me?

Jimmy—Great Scott, girl, do I love you! Ain't I kept my hands and face clean for more than a week all on account of you?



Reginald—Will you marry me if I put your skate on for you?
Virginia—Yes, if you'll promise never to get a skate on for yourself.

TACKLES

Time to Alight.

One cold, wintry morning a man of tall and angular build was walking down a steep hill at a quick pace. A treacherous piece of ice under the snow caused him to lose control of his feet; he began to slide and was unable to stop.

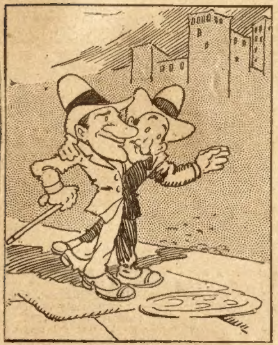
At a cross-street half-way down the decline he encountered a large, heavy woman, with her arms full of bundles. The meeting was sudden, and before either realized it a collision ensued and both were sliding down-hill—the thin man underneath, the fat woman and bundles on top. When the bottom was reached and the woman was trying in vain to recover her breath and her feet, these faint words were borne to her ear:

"Pardon me, madam, but you will have to get off here. This is as far as I go."

DISTINGUISHING MARK.

Note the distinction clearly,
And let the words be heeded:
A genius, my son, is merely
A crank who has succeeded.

No Room.



White—Brown's wife must be a regular chatterbox. Heard Brown say he couldn't get a word in edgeways.

Black—Not altogether Mrs. Brown's fault. They live in a flat.

A Fine Business.

Mr Gothan—And so, my son, you have been very successful in the West?

Enterprising Son—Yes, indeed, father. I've become a city founder.

Mr. Gotham—A what?

Enterprising Son—I found cities, you know. Fine paying business, I can tell you. Look at this map of Golden Rod City. Look at the parks, and boulevards, and corners for public buildings, and the big spaces for factories. I sold 1,600 lots in Golden Rod City last month—just think of it!

Mr. Gotham—My! my! Where is it located?

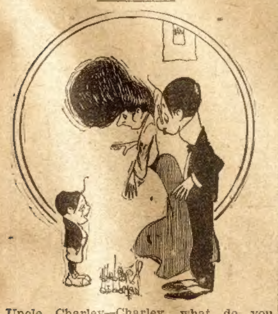
Enterprising Son—Well, the fact is, it ain't located anywhere yet; but that'll be all fixed after we sell a few hundred lots more. You see, there isn't any use looking for a location until we have money enough to pay for the land, you know.

Failure.

Reporters met the returning delegate to the peace congress.

"Did you muzzle the dogs of war?" they asked him.

"Naw," he said, with some asperity, "we couldn't even muzzle each other."



Uncle Charley—Charley, what do you want to be when you grow up?

Charley (remembering the last encounter with the switch)—An orphan.

Faith.

Little Willie—What is faith, pa?

Pa—Faith, my son, is something that will cause a bald-headed man to buy a bottle of infallible hair restorer from a druggist who hasn't a hair on his head.

He Took the Blame.

Muggins—Behold in me a self-made man.

Diggins—I congratulate you because of your charitableness.

Muggins—I beg pardon?

Diggins—You are certainly charitable in taking all the blame on yourself.

His Correspondence.

Mr. Deepyn was explaining to his wife why he happened to be two or three hours late for dinner.

"I was at the office, my dear," he said, "answering a couple of letters."

"Did the answering of two letters take all that time?" she asked.

"Why, yes; I—er—had to write a good many answers to them."

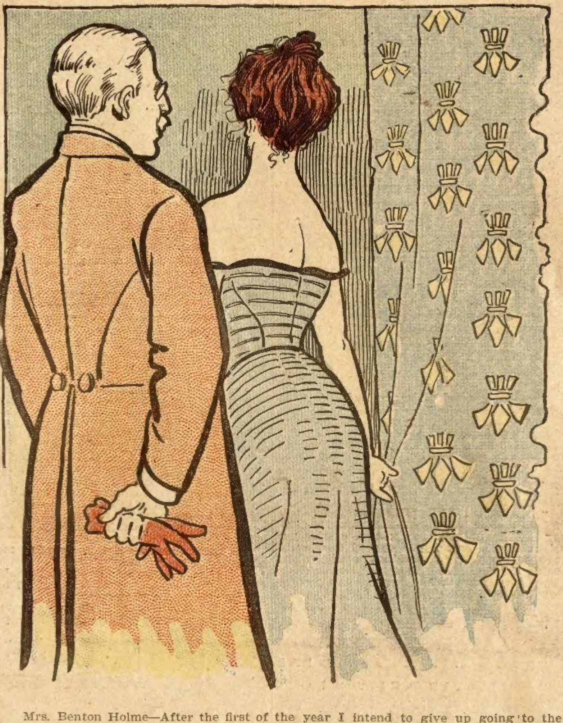
"What were the two letters, if I may ask?"

"They were U. O."

Rare Good Luck.

Fond Mama—Why, what have you in your apron?

Little Daughter (breathlessly)—Oh, Mama! Such good luck! Dotty Dimple's cat had six kittens, and her mama would not let her keep but one, so she gave me the other five.



Mrs. Benton Holme—After the first of the year I intend to give up going to the theater and stop buying candy and flowers. Now what are you going to do?

Benton Holme—Judging from what you say, I'm going to save money.

Too Improbable.

"Mr. Addemup," inquired Mr. Spotcash, head of the firm of Spotcash & Co., "can't you afford to smoke better cigars than that one?"

"Not on my salary, sir," answered the bookkeeper.

"Hereafter," rejoined his chief, "your salary will $10 a week more."

With a violent effort Mr. Addemup woke himself. He knew it was nothing but a dream.

Wanted Three Months.

"The judge gave him thirty days."

"Old stingy! He knew a hard winter was coming on."

Disputed the Proposition.

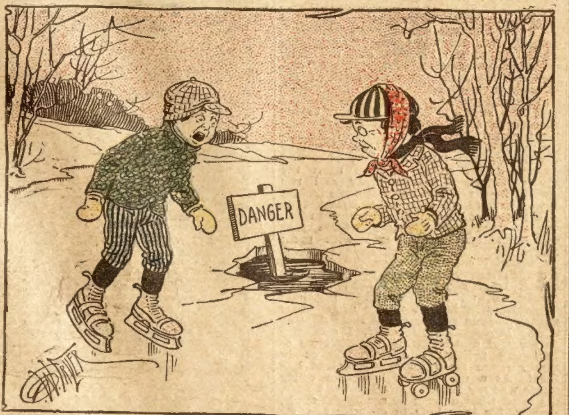
"All that you are, my friend," said the lecturer, singling out an elderly man sitting in a front seat, who appeared to be deeply interested, "all that you are, I repeat, you owe to heredity and environment."

"Gosh!" exclaimed the elderly man, turning red with indignation, "I never had no dealings with that firm in my life, and I don't owe them nor nobody else a blamed cent!"

Not Explicit Enough.

Man at Lunch Counter—I'm dieting, by order of the doctor. Give me a sardine sandwich on crackers.

Waiter—Yes, sir. Soda or oyster?



Johnny—Say, Jimmy, wot yer got dat roller skate on one foot and an ice skate on der other fer?

Jimmy—Gee! I never skated on ice before an' I'm learning one foot at a time.

AGENTS WANTED

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PORTRAIT AGENTS MAKE BIG MONEY in handling our High Grade Goods which we sell at low prices. We guarantee our portraits to deliver and give the best of satisfaction. Our line of frames, sheet pictures and pillow tops is unsurpassed. Credit given. We make prompt shipments. Ask for catalog. If you are looking for a reliable and competent house to handle your business, send it to ADAM J. KROLL & CO., Dept. P, 722 New Era Bldg., CHICAGO

$90 A MONTH for men to put out Merchandise and Grocery Catalogs. Mail Order House. Blew Bros., Chicago

AGENTS, CREDIT, Perfumes, Flavors, etc. Big profits. Express Paid. Terms Free. HERBENE AGENCY Co., Box 282, Sta'n L, New York

$150. A MONTH PROFIT E. B. ROBERTS, BERKSHIRE CO., MASS. earns selling Electric Combs, YOU CAN EARN IT Dr. C. L. HULL, 1481 Penn Ave., Pittsburg, Pa.

AGENTS WANTED to sell pocket knives with name and photo on handle; write for terms. Morris Cutlery Co., Morris, Ill., P O Box A

AGENTS $300 Every Month selling our wonderful SEVEN-PIECE KITCHEN SET Send for sworn statement of $12 daily profit; exclusive territory. Outfit Free. B. THOMAS MFG. Co., 713 F St., Dayton, O.

SELL TOBACCO and CIGARS, locally or traveling. Salary or commission. Full time or side line. Good pay; promotion; experience unnecessary. Write Morotock Tobacco Works, Box C18, Danville, Va.

AGENTS. $150.00 per month easily made selling my new patent Floor Mop. Sells like wildfire. If you want a Cracker Jack article write to E. HILKER, 371 Grand Ave., CHICAGO

AGENTS to sell a new method for mending holes in all kinds of Granite and Tinware, no heat required; sample and terms free. Address E. E. PECK, Dept. H, BATAVIA, N. Y.

AGENTS to sell New York Suburban lots $20 buys a lot; easy terms; man made $5,000 last year, several made $1,600 working nights. You can do same. Write for maps and particulars. W. C. REEVES & CO., Dept. A, 1188 Broadway, New York City.

$3 a Day Sure Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure; we furnish the work and teach you free, you work in the locality where you live. Send us your address and we will explain the business fully, remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work, absolutely sure. Write at once. ROYAL MANUFACTURING CO., Box 1016 Detroit, Mich.

MEN WANTED in every locality in the United States to advertise our goods, tack up showcards in all conspicuous places and distribute small advertising matter. Commission or salary $83 per month and expenses $4 per day. Steady work the year round; entirely new plan; no experience required. Write for particulars. WM. R. WARNER MED. CO., London, Ont., Canada

AGENTS GET THIS $200 Taking only one order a day for our high-class, medium priced made-to-order Suits, Overcoats and Trousers will give you a steady monthly income of $200.00 or more. No previous experience needed to succeed—our special guarantee plan gets the orders. Large Sample Outfit in Traveling Case furnished live hustlers free. Write now and get into business backed by big house. We will make you a cracker-jack, well-dressed salesman with money. WARRINGTON WORSTED & WOOLEN MILLS Dept. 80 178 Adams St., Chicago.

USE OUR MONEY Establish a pleasant, profitable and lasting business of your own. Be your own boss. We start you in the portrait business which will make you independent. We are practical men having worked up from the ranks ourselves. We are glad to help you. What we did you can do. Free Outfit. Our 248 page book explains everything. Write for it today. A SNAP For LIVE AGENTS Consolidated Portrait Co., 290-30 W. Adams St., Chicago

MAKE MONEY EASY Agents wanted in every county to sell the popular Novelty Knives for Christmas Gifts with name, address, photo, lodge emblem, etc., on handle. AGENTS EARN $75 to $300 A MONTH (We show you how) Big profits—quick sales—exclusive territory. Write quick for our liberal money making special offer to agents. Our new self-sharpening scissors are the quickest sellers for lady agents. NOVELTY CUTLERY CO., 23 BAR STREET, CANTON, O.

You Can Make $500 With This In Next 3 Months Every farmer wants one at sight. No trouble to sell and pays good profits. One agent makes $1,500 a year selling our tools. Many others doing almost as well Hammer Hatchet, Nail Claw, Wire Cutter, Leather Punch, Pinchers Screw Driver, Staple Puller 8 TOOLS IN ONE Write today for our special price to agents and Agents' Guide "The Way to Win" also catalog full of money makers. FOOTE MFG. CO. Dept. 102 Dayton, O. Great Agents Supply House, formerly of Fredericktown

BIG MAIL FREE! POST OFFICE Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers, supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. We have been publishing the Agent's Directory List for several years and refer to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST, INDIANA, Indiana County, PENNA.

When answering advertisements you will favor the advertiser and the publishers by mentioning The Chicago Ledger.

The Damned Thing

BY AMBROSE BIERCE.

I.

By the light of a tallow candle, which had been placed on one end of a rough table, a man was reading something written in a book. It was an old account book, greatly worn; and the writing was not, apparently, very legible, for the man sometimes held the page close to the flame of the candle to get a stronger light upon it. The shadow of the book would then throw into obscurity a half of the room, darkening a number of faces and figures; for besides the reader, eight other men were present. Seven of them sat against the rough log walls, silent and motionless, and, the room being small, not very far from the table. By extending an arm any one of them could have touched the eighth man who lay on the table, face upward, partly covered by a sheet, his arms at his sides. He was dead.

The man with the book was not reading aloud, and no one spoke; all seemed to be waiting for something to occur; the dead man only was without expectation. From the blank darkness outside came in, through the aperture that served for a window, all the unfamiliar noises of night in the wilderness—the long, nameless note of a distant coyote; the silly pulsing thrill of tireless insects in trees; strange cries of night birds, so different from those of the birds of day; the drone of great blundering beetles, and all that mysterious chorus of small sounds that seem always to have been but half heard when they have suddenly ceased, as if conscious of an indiscretion. But nothing of all this was noted in that company; its members were not overmuch addicted to idle interest in matters of no practical importance; that was obvious in every line of their rugged faces—obvious even in the dim light of the single candle. They were evidently men of the vicinity—farmers and woodmen.

The person reading was a trifle different; one would have said of him that he was of the world, worldly, albeit there was that in his attire which attested a certain fellowship with the organisms of his environments. His coat would hardly have passed muster in San Francisco; his footgear was not of urban origin, and the hat that lay by him on the floor (he was the only one uncovered) was such that if one had considered it an article of mere personal adornment he would have missed its meaning. In countenance the man was rather prepossessing, with just a hint of sternness; though that he may have assumed or cultivated, as appropriate to one in authority. For he was a coroner. It was by virtue to his office that he had possession of the book in which he was reading; it had been found among the dead man's effects—in his cabin, where the inquest was now taking place.

When the coroner had finished reading he put the book into his breast pocket. At that moment the door was pushed open and a young man entered. He, clearly, was not of mountain birth and breeding; he was clad as those who dwell in cities. His clothing was dusty, however, as from travel. He had, in fact, been riding hard to attend the inquest.

The coroner nodded; no one else greeted him.

"We have waited for you," said the coroner. "It is necessary to have done with this business tonight."

The young man smiled. "I am sorry to have kept you," he said. "I went away, not to evade your summons, but to post to my newspaper an account of what I suppose I am called back to relate."

The coroner smiled.

"The account that you posted to your newspaper," he said, "differs probably from that which you will give here under oath."

"That," replied the other, rather hotly and with a visible flush, "is as you choose. I used manifold paper and have a copy of what I sent. It was not written as news, for it is incredible, but as fiction. It may go as a part of my testimony under oath."

"But you say it is incredible."

"That is nothing to you, sir, if I also swear that it is true."

The coroner was apparently not greatly affected by the young man's manifest resentment. He was silent for some moments, his eyes upon the floor. The men about the sides of the cabin talked in whispers, but seldom withdrew their gaze from the face of the corpse. Presently the coroner lifted his eyes and said: "We will resume the inquest."

The men removed their hats. The witness was sworn.

"What is your name?" the coroner asked.

"William Harker."

"Age?"

"Twenty-seven."

"You knew the deceased, Hugh Morgan?"

"Yes."

"You were with him when he died?"

"Near him."

"How did it happen—your presence, I mean?"

"I was visiting him at this place to shoot and fish. A part of my purpose, however, was to study him, and his odd, solitary way of life. He seemed a good model for a character in fiction. I sometimes write stories."

"I sometimes read them."

"Thank you."

"Stories in general—not yours."

Some of the jurors laughed. Against a somber background humor shows high lights. Soldiers in the intervals of battle laugh easily, and jest in the death chambers conquers by surprise.

"Relate the circumstances of this man's death," said the coroner. "You may use any notes or memoranda that you please."

The witness understood. Pulling a manuscript from his breast pocket he held it near the candle, and turning the leaves until he found the passage he wanted, began to read.

II.

". . . The sun had hardly risen when we left the house. We were looking for quail, each with a shotgun, but we had only one dog. Morgan said that our best ground was beyond a certain ridge that he pointed out, and we crossed it by a trail through the chaparral. On the other side was comparatively level ground, thickly covered with wild oats. As we emerged from the chaparral, Morgan was but a few yards in advance. Suddenly, we heard, at a little distance to our right and partly in front, a noise as of some animal thrashing about in the bushes, which we could see were violently agitated.

" 'We've started a deer,' I said. 'I wish we had brought a rifle.'

"Morgan, who had stopped and was intently watching the agitated chaparral, said nothing, but had cocked both barrels of his gun and was holding it in readiness to aim. I thought him a trifle excited, which surprised me, for he had a reputation for exceptional coolness, even in moments of sudden and imminent peril.

" 'O, come!' I said. 'You are not going to fill up a deer with quail-shot, are you?'

"Still he did not reply; but, catching a sight of his face as he turned it slightly toward me, I was struck by the pallor of it. Then I understood that we had serious business on hand, and my first conjecture was that we had 'jumped' a grizzly. I advanced to Morgan's side, cocking my piece as I moved.

"The bushes were now quiet, and the sounds had ceased, but Morgan was as attentive to the place as before.

" 'What is it? What the devil is it?' I asked.

" 'That Damned Thing!' he replied, without turning his head. His voice was husky and unnatural. He trembled visibly.

"I was about to speak further, when I observed the wild oats near the place of the disturbance moving in the most inexplicable way. I can hardly describe it. It seemed as if stirred by a streak of wind which not only bent it, but pressed it down—crushed it so that it did not rise, and this movement was slowly prolonging itself directly toward us.

"Nothing that had ever been seen had affected me so strangely as this unfamiliar and unaccountable phenomenon, yet I am unable to recall any sense of fear. I remember—and tell it here because, singularly enough, I recollected it then—that once, in looking carelessly out of an open window, I momentarily mistook a small tree close at hand for one of a group of larger trees at a little distance away. It looked the same size as the others, but being more distinctly and sharply defined in mass and detail, seemed out of harmony with them. It was a mere falsification of the law of aerial perspective, but it startled, almost terrified me. We so rely upon the orderly operation of familiar natural laws that any seeming suspension of them is noted as a menace to our safety, a warning of unthinkable calamity. So now the apparently causeless movement of the herbage, and the slow, undeviating approach of the line of disturbance were distinctly disquieting. My companion appeared actually frightened, and I could hardly credit my senses when I saw him suddenly throw his gun to his shoulder and fire both barrels at the agitated grass! Before the smoke of the discharge had cleared away I heard a loud savage cry—a scream like that of a wild animal—and flinging his gun upon the ground, Morgan sprang away and ran swiftly from the spot. At the same instant I was thrown violently to the ground by the impact of something unseen in the smoke—some soft, heavy substance that seemed thrown against me with great force.

"Before I could get upon my feet and recover my gun, which seemed to have been struck from my hands, I heard Morgan crying out as if in mortal agony, and mingling with his cries were such hoarse savage sounds as one hears from fighting dogs. Inexpressibly terrified, I struggled to my feet and looked in the direction of Morgan's retreat; and may Heaven in mercy spare me from another sight like that! At a distance of less than thirty yards was my friend, down upon one knee, his head thrown back at a frighful angle, hatless, his long hair in disorder and his whole body in violent movement from side to side, backward and forward. His right arm was lifted and seemed to lack the hand—at least, I could see none. The other arm was invisible. At times, as my memory reports this extraordinary scene, I could discern but a part of his body; it was as if he had been partly blotted out—I can not otherwise express it—then a shifting of his position would bring it all into view again.

"All this must have occurred within a few seconds, yet in that time Morgan assumed all the postures of a determined wrestler vanquished by superior weight and strength. I saw nothing but him, and him not always distinctly. During the entire incident his shouts and curses were heard, as if through an enveloping uproar of such sounds of rage and fury as I had never heard from the throat of man or brute!

"For a moment only I stood resolute, then, throwing down my gun, I ran forward to my friend's assistance. I had a vague belief that he was suffering from a fit or some form of convulsion. Before I could reach his side he was down and quiet. All sounds had ceased, but, with a feeling of such terror as even these awful events had not inspired, I now saw the same mysterious movement of the wild oats prolonging itself from the trampled area about the prostrate man toward the edge of the wood. It was only when it had reached the wood that I was able to withdraw my eyes and look at my companion. He was dead."

III.

The coroner rose from his seat and stood beside the dead man. Lifting the edge of the sheet he pulled it away, exposing the entire body, altogether naked and showing in the candle light a clay-like yellow. It had, however, broad maculations of bluish black, obviously caused by extravasated blood from the contusions. The chest and sides looked as if they had been beaten with a bludgeon. There were dreadful lacerations; the skin was torn in strips and shreds.

The coroner moved round to the end of the table and undid a silk handkerchief, which had been passed under the chin and knotted on the top of the head. When the handkerchief was drawn away it exposed what had been the throat. Some of the jurors who had risen to get a better view repented their curiosity, and turned away their faces. Witness Harker went to the open window and leaned out across the sill, faint and sick. Dropping the handkerchief upon the dead man's neck, the coroner stepped to an angle of the room, and from a pile of clothing produced one garment after another, each of which he held up a moment for inspection. All were torn, and stiff with blood. The jurors did not make a closer inspection. They seemed rather uninterested. They had, in truth, seen all this before; the only thing that was new to them being Harker's testimony.

"Gentlemen," the coroner said, "we have no more evidence, I think. Your duty has already been explained to you; if there is nothing you wish to ask you may go outside and consider your verdict."

The foreman rose—a tall, bearded man of sixty, coarsely clad.

"I should like to ask one question, Mr. Coroner," he said. "What asylum did this yer last witness escape from?"

"Mr. Harker," said the coroner, gravely and tranquilly, "from what asylum did you last escape?"

Harker flushed crimson again, but said nothing, and the seven jurors rose and solemnly filed out of the cabin.

"If you have done insulting me, sir," said Harker, as soon as he and the officer were left alone with the dead man, "I suppose I am at liberty to go?"

"Yes."

Harker started to leave, but paused, with his hand on the door latch. The habit of his profession was strong in him—stronger than his sense of personal dignity. He turned about and said:

"The book you have there—I recognize it as Morgan's diary. You seemed greatly interested in it; you read in it while I was testifying. May I see it? The public would like——"

"The book will cut no figure in this matter," replied the official, slipping it into his coat pocket; "all the entries in it were made before the writer's death."

As Harker passed out of the house the jury reentered and stood about the table, on which the now covered corpse showed under the sheet with sharp definition. The foreman seated himself near the candle, produced from his breast pocket a pencil and scrap of paper, and wrote rather laboriously the following verdict, which with various degrees of effort all signed:

"We, the jury, do find that the remains come to their death at the hands of a mountain lion, but some of us thinks, all the same, they had fits."

IV.

In the diary of the late Hugh Morgan are certain interesting entries having, possibly, a scientific value as suggestions. At the inquest upon his body the book was not put in evidence; possibly the coroner thought it not worth while to confuse the jury. The date of the first of the entries mentioned can not be ascertained; the upper part of the leaf is torn away; the part of the entry remaining is as follows:

". . . would run in a half-circle, keeping his head always toward the center and again he would stand still, barking furiously. At last he ran away into the brush as fast as he could go. I thought at first that he had gone mad, but on returning to the house found no other alteration in his manner than what was obviously due to fear of punishment.

"Can a dog see with his nose? Do odors impress some olfactory center with images of the things emitting them? . . .

"Sept. 2.—Looking at the stars last night as they rose above the crest of the ridge east of the house, I observed them successively disappear—from left to right. Each was eclipsed but an instant, and only a few at the same time, but along the entire length of the ridge all there were within a degree or two of the crest were blotted out. It was as if something had passed along between me and them; but I could not see it, and the stars were not thick enough to define its outline. Ugh! I don't like this . . ."

Several weeks' entries are missing, three leaves being torn from the book.

"Sept. 27.—It has been about here again—I find evidences of its presence every day. I watched again last night in the same cover, gun in hand, double-charged with buckshot. In the morning the fresh footprints were there, as before. Yet I would have sworn that I did not sleep—indeed, I hardly slept at all. It is terrible, insupportable! If these amazing experiences are real I shall go mad; if they are fanciful I am mad already.

"Oct. 3.—I shall not go—it shall not drive me away. No, this is my house, my land. God hates a coward . .

"Oct. 5.—I can stand it no longer; I have invited Harker to pass a few weeks with me—he has a level head. I can judge from his manner if he thinks me mad.

"Oct. 7.—I have the solution of the problem; it came to me last night—suddenly, as by revelation. How simple—how terribly simple!

"There are sounds that we cannot hear. At either end of the scale are notes that stir no chord of that imperfect instrument, the human ear. They are too high or too grave. I have observed a flock of blackbirds occupying an entire treetop—the tops of several trees—and all in full song. Suddenly—in a moment—at absolutely the same instant—all spring into the air and fly away. How? They could not all see one another—while treetops intervened. At no point could a leader have been visible to all. There must have been a signal of warning or command, high and shrill above the din, but by me unheard. I have observed, too, the same simultaneous flight when all were silent, among not only blackbirds, but other birds—quail, for example, widely separated by bushes—even on opposite sides of the hill.

"It is known to seamen that a school of whales basking or sporting on the surface of the ocean, with the convexity of the earth between them, will sometimes dive at the same instant—all gone out of sight in a moment. The signal has been sounded—too grave for the ear of the sailor at the masthead and his comrades on the deck—who nevertheless feel its vibrations in the ship as the stones of a cathedral are stirred by the bass of the organ.

"As with sounds, so with colors. At each end of the solar spectrum the chemist can detect the presence of what are known as 'actinic' rays. They represent colors—integral colors in the composition of light—which we are unable to discern. The human eye is an imperfect instrument; its range is but a few octaves of the real 'chromatic scale.' I am not mad; there are colors that we can not see.

"And, God help me! the Damned Thing is of such a color!"

Never judge what a man thinks by what he says to his wife.

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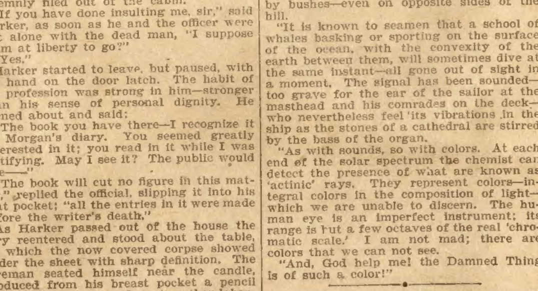

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HOW DICK WAS CURED.

BY EMMA GARRISON JONES.

"You're a fool for your pains, sir!"

That was the only sentence the parrot could utter. But she was a pretty, cunning bird, and Jenny Selwyn thought the world of her, because she was a gift from her lover.

Now, Dick Heath was Jenny's lover, a fine, well-to-do young lawyer, and the handsomest man in town. Dick had but one great fault—he was prone to jealousy, and this fault caused him a great deal of needless trouble.

The summer-time of his courtship was more than once overcast with clouds in consequence of Dick's insane passion. Jenny was truly a pretty creature, and had scores of admirers, but she was as true and tender, as she was good and beautiful. Dick had won her heart, and henceforth no other man had any claim upon her. But poor Dick could not bring himself to believe this, and if his charmer chanced to smile or speak a pleasant word to any other gentleman, he felt himself bitterly injured, and often reproached the innocent girl in the most unmanly manner.

But Jenny loved her jealous bear, and a woman will bear a great deal from the man she loves. She did her best to soothe him, and hoped that time would cure him of his disagreeable fault.

By and by they became engaged, and the wedding-day was appointed, and in honor of the occasion Dick presented his affianced with two gifts—a handsome and very expensive engagement ring, and the cunning green parrot. Of course, Jenny was much delighted, and kissed the parrot's glossy wings, whereupon Dick kissed her; while Poll, growing indignant, shrieked fiercely:

"You're a fool for your pains, sir!"

But the engagement ring was a marvel, a curious, unique affair, after the order of Marie Antoinette's talisman—a coiled serpent of red, Indian gold, every tiny scale a flashing gem, and the eyes two gleaming diamonds. There were only two at the jeweler's; one Dick purchased at an extravagant price, and the other one was bespoken. Of course, Dick did not care to inquire by whom.

Jenny was much pleased and flattered when this quaint and costly jewel was put upon her slender finger, and loved her handsome lover all the more for his extravagance, though she chided him in a charming demure fashion for spending so much money, and said she should take great care of her costly ring, as they might have to sell it some day, if they got into difficulties, as married housekeepers seemed prone to do.

Whereupon Dick kissed her again, to the parrot's disgust, and happy Jenny thought her troubles were all over. Of course, Dick would never be jealous again.

The wedding-day came and passed, the bridal-tour was ended, and then Dick and his pretty bride settled down in their own home, not quite to Jenny's satisfaction, however, for another of Dick's failings began to crop out. He was extravagant in other matters beside the choosing of his engagement ring. The furniture, the dinner-set, the silver, the carpets, were all very expensive.

"It is always wiser to buy the best of everything, my love," said Dick, with lofty, masculine wisdom, when Jenny ventured to remonstrate.

"Yes, I know, Dick dear, when one has the money," responded Jenny meekly.

"Oh, well, we shall get the money eventually, and all the debts will be wiped out—don't you worry, pet."

But pet did worry in her secret heart, and saw trouble in the future, and maybe the sale of her precious ring; but she wore it every day on her slim finger, and always had a bright face when her husband came home.

Dick, indifferent regarding his debts, went to and from his office, day after day, as happy as a king. One unlucky afternoon, however, he chanced to get out a couple of hours ahead of his usual time, and took a stroll downtown to hunt for some pretty toy for baby—for Jenny was a mother by this time.

Sauntering along, and puffing at his cigar, and taking note of the shop-windows, a couple just before him all at once caught his eye. He came to a dead halt, and stood staring.

It was Jenny, his wife—he knew her brown dress, and her hat, and her blonde curls—and her companion was Mr. Dubant, the young musicmaster at the academy.

A very ugly expression crept over Dick's handsome face, and he started forward in fierce pursuit; but the pair had already turned the corner, and, changing his mind the jealous husband turned his steps in the direction of his own cottage.

Baby's toy was forgotten, and poor Dick rushed at a great pace, tortured by his miserable imaginings. This Mr. Dubant had been a great admirer of Jenny's in the days of her girlhood, and several times since her marriage he had dropped in of an evening; and they had sang and played together. And here they were out walking in his absence, and without his permission.

Dick was furiously jealous. He hurried home, and his fears were confirmed—his wife was out. She went out about that time every day, the nursemaid told him.

That night the miserable man said nothing, feigning illness to satisfy Jenny's anxious inquiries as to what made him so moody and silent.

The next afternoon he determined to be on the watch again. But after waiting an hour, and seeing no sign of the guilty couple, he made his way to Mr. Dubant's chambers, with the intention of calling him to an account for what he had done.

The musicmaster sat at his table, copying some music, when poor, jealous Dick entered; and on one finger of his white, shapely hand glittered a curious ring—Jenny's own engagement ring beyond all doubt.

It caught the husband's eye in a minute, and threw him into an insane rage. Without a moment's thought, or a word of explanation, he flew at the astonished musicmaster, and, seizing him by the collar, proceed to chastise him quite severely with a small cane he chanced to have in his hand.

Mr. Dubant, fancying that he was in the hands of a madman, used his lungs quite lustily; but Dick kept his hold, and belabored him most unmercifully.

"Now, you contemptible scoundrel!" he panted, at last, "see if you'll walk with my wife again! Give me that ring on your finger, do you hear? I'll throttle you if you don't."

By this time Mr. Dubant was seriously alarmed, and the moment his insane assaulter loosened his hold he darted into an adjoining room and closed and locked the door.

Dick fumed and stormed for a few minutes, and then departed, eager to expend his remaining fury upon his wife.

He reached the cottage porch at the same instant that she came up from an opposite direction. She hastened to meet him as usual, but she flushed, and looked somewhat embarrassed, and said:

"Oh, Dick, dear, I didn't look for you so soon."

"I suppose not," responded Dick, with bitter sarcasm. "Where have you been, madam? Where do you go every afternoon?"

Jenny looked up into his distorted face in wide-eyed surprise.

"Dick, what do you mean?" she faltered.

"Where's your engagement ring?" he demanded savagely. "Let me see it."

She blushed rosy red now, and dropped her eyes.

"Dick, I'm sorry," she began. "I meant to tell you, but I hoped I should get it again——"

"Silence!" he thundered. "You base false woman! Out of my sight, or I shall forget you are the mother of my child! I never want to see you again."

He wheeled, choked with misery and passion, and strode away. At nightfall, when he returned, Jenny and her baby were gone.

He sat down in the deserted sitting-room, sick with misery. She had broken his heart and disgraced his name, and the best he could do would be to take his derringer and blow out his brains. He started up, quite insane enough to carry this mad thought into action.

"You're a fool for your pains, sir!" cried the parrot from her cage.

Somehow the words arrested him. He stood irresolute, pressing his hands to his hot, throbbing head.

"You're a fool for your pains, sir," shrieked Poll, again.

"Confound that bird," he stormed, and, rushing across to her cage, he gave it a spiteful shake.

Something bright fell through the wires and rolled gleaming and tinkling to the floor. He stooped and picked it up, scarcely knowing what he did, but at sight of it he gave a great start. It was Jenny's engagement ring!

"You're a fool for your pains, sir," repeated Poll, cocking her bright eye maliciously.

But, rat, tat, came at the front door, before poor, bewildered Dick had time to get his breath. He slipped the ring into his vest pocket and went himself to answer the summons, with a faint hope that it might be Jenny coming back.

But he confronted a pair of officers instead armed with a warrant against him for assault and battery on Mr. Charles Dubant. So he was taken into custody, and marched down to the town prison to await his examination before the magistrate on the following morning.

In his gloomy, lonesome cell, the poor fellow sat down and listened to the dreary wind and dripping rain outside.

His passion had spent itself, leaving him in a weak and miserable condition, and his mind was so dazed that he could scarcely determine who was to blame, himself or Jenny.

Presently, while he sat in his gloom and despair, he caught a sound of footsteps—light, tripping steps, that made every nerve in his body thrill. The door opened and Jenny entered.

She had determined to be very angry with Dick, but at sight of his poor miserable face, the tears streamed from her blue eyes, and she ran to him and threw both her arms round his neck.

"Oh, Dick," she sobbed, "how could you? And you promised me never to be jealous again! Dick, you can't tell how it hurts me to think you could doubt me—could think me bad, Dick—and I love you so. Why, dear, I meant to tell you about it—I only wanted to get started first. You see, Dick, dear," still sobbing, and kissing him with every breath, "you would have things so expensive, and the bills kept coming in so, and there was no money, so I thought I'd try to help a little. You won't be angry, Dick? It was Mr. Dubant who helped me, you see. He got me a place to teach music, and went with me, and introduced me and I got such good pay, and he was so kind. Dick—that was all, dear, and I meant to tell you, only I was afraid you might object. Indeed, Dick, you have treated Mr. Dubant very badly, but he's willing to let it all pass. He came to see me at papa's, and told me about it, and said he was very mad at first, and had a warrant out for you, but it is all settled now, and you are to go home with me, dear. But, oh, Dick," she added, "what a foolish mistake—you made about the ring. That was not mine you saw on Mr. Dubant's finger. I lost mine, Dick. I took it off to wash my hands, and laid it on the window-sill, and I never saw it again. I'm sorry, Dick, but——"

He drew the ring from his pocket, and slipped it on her finger.

"I found it, Jenny," he said, commanding his voice by a great effort. "It fell from the parrot's cage. I am a fool for my pains, as the bird said. Jenny, can you ever forgive me?"

"I forgave you as soon as I came in, dear, and saw your poor, miserable face," she answered, touching her soft lips to his cheek; "and I do trust, Dick, love, that this lesson will cure you of your one fault."

"I am cured, Jenny," he replied; "I shall never be jealous again!"

About Short Beds

"Why is it," asked an English commercial traveler the other day, who has been visiting these shores at frequent intervals for the last 18 years, "that all bedsteads in this country are made so much smaller than they were a few years ago? Once an American bedstead was long enough for the Russian giant to stretch out in, and broad enough for two aldermen to sleep in without touching one another. But year by year your bedstead builders have shortened their bedsteads by one-half or a whole inch, until now an American bedstead isn't large enough for any decent-sized man like myself.

"For instance, the day before yesterday I visited an old friend of mine away up in the Bronx, and he persuaded me to remain his guest over night. Well, the bed he assigned for my use was so darned small that I came pretty near having to sleep with my feet out of the window.

"Why, sir, only ten years ago I was sure of finding in any hotel here a bedstead that was wide enough to be comfortable. Now, even in your big, swell hotels and apartment houses that have just opened up, the bedsteads are so narrow that you can't turn over in the night without rolling all the bedclothes on the floor. I saw some new bedsteads at a furniture store on Sixth avenue yesterday, and they were so narrow that I stopped and looked at them. 'Fine single bedsteads,' said the furniture man, evidently taking me for a likely customer. 'Just the thing for young people going to set up housekeeping.' 'Would you mind telling me,' said I, 'if young people in New York are expected to sleep on their edges, and if they average more than three inches in width from backbone to breastbone?' I really wanted information, you know, but the furniture man suddenly turned rusty, and I strolled on my way.

"The French, you know, shortened their bedsteads over a generation ago, and it was the beginning, I believe, of the shortening of the Frenchmen, as well as race suicide in their country. You people, it seems to me, are beginning to go on the same downward paths, and I suppose before this real danger to the nation can be effectually stopped the bedstead will first have to be made a national political issue."

A Popular Dance.

First Sweet Girl—Oh, you should dance Strauss' new minuet waltz, it's perfectly lovely!

Second Sweet Girl—I hate those poky old minuet figures.

First Sweet Girl—Oh, it isn't like the old minuet at all. It's too lovely for anything! You waltz a while, and then the music changes and you go off in a corner and hug.

* * *

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The Rogues of Rogue River

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Begun in No. 51, Dec. 21. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOGDALE JAIL.

Thornton proceeded to read his warrant. The mate of The Happy Hand stood at attention, yet heard not a word of what was being read by the county official. His thoughts were of the tragedy of the night. The face of Ross Ruddiford, dead and white among the reeds of the river, haunted him.

"And now I shall require the presence of several of your men. Call them here, sir."

The boy mate did as directed. The officer seemed to have several names in his little book which he read off. As each one answered he subpoenaed him to appear as a witness before a justice in Logdale on the following day. It was soon over. The steamer was swung into the stream and conveyed the whole lumber party back to Logdale, where, just below the mill, it was tied up to the lumber dock.

When conveyed to jail Mate Jeffords was surprised to find his captain occupying a cell in the village bastile. He had been removed from the basement of the house at Hilltop this very morning.

It was not till this hour that Jeffords knew what he was detained to answer. All along he had a dim idea that it was for the murder of Ross Ruddiford.

Abel talked with the deputy sheriff who was jailer as well.

"It's for maliciously destroying public property that has got you into limbo," explained the official. "Didn't the warrant tell you plain enough?"

"Maybe it did. I didn't hear a word of it though."

"Pretty badly scared, eh?" and the officer laughed.

"Not at what you have done, but about Ross."

"Well, what about him?"

"I'm afraid, sir, that he is drowned in the river."

The voice of the speaker trembled with emotion.

"How's that? I hadn't heard anything about it. I thought—"

"We carried him with us you see, after the bridge tumbled in. He fell overboard by accident, and we were unable to find him afterward; that was why we were moored at the spot you found us."

"I see," said the officer. "Well, it may be well enough to look into this. I hadn't heard that Ross was lost. I expect you will want to get bail won't you, my boy?"

"Well, yes, I think so," returned Abel, who was too deeply flustered to still think clearly. "I am alone guilty of tearing down the bridge, sir. I can't think you are holding Rodney for that?"

"No, we aren't. It is for something worse."

"What then? I am sure—"

"You're sure of nothing, my friend," broke in the deputy sheriff. "There was a graver crime than bridge destroying done two nights ago, no less than the dynamiting of a building in which a human life was jeopardized. That comes under the head of murder, you understand."

"I should think it would."

"And that is not a bailable offense, you know. While you can get the required bail, your captain, being accused of a graver crime, must lie in jail till his trial comes off. Now if you would like to see a man I will do it, for it's no fun to sit in this cell and wait till tomorrow.

"If Sam Dallard or Dick Dingle are told of my trouble, either will aid me," declared the young prisoner.

"Dick may be all right, but Sam has run away."

"What, Sam Dallard run away? I don't——"

"No, you don't believe it although it's a fact all the same."

"But why should Sam run away? He's the finest fellow I know."

"He was the very fellow who touched off the dynamite, bub."

"I won't believe that. Why should he do it?"

"To tear away the boom and open the river for The Happy Hand, that's why. The proof of his act is positive; there were eye-witnesses you see."

This announcement silenced the astonished prisoner.

The officer's avowal shocked Abel Jeffords, who was really a conscientious youth, and had gone into the enterprise with Rod Marand in full faith of the righteousness of the cause. If Sam Dallard had resorted to dynamite that was a different affair.

"I am sorry for Sam," he said at length. "He was a good fellow, and his father and mother will suffer the most——"

"Rot!" sneered Thornton. "What can you expect from a boy brought up as Sam has been, with pious platitudes dinged into his ears from his cradle up. Preacher's sons are always devils."

And then Thornton turned the key on his prisoner and left him.

At noon dinner was brought. Abel ate heartily. He had recovered his nerve to a remarkable degree. Thornton stopped but a moment, returning later to remove the tray.

"How about Ross?" quickly inquired the prisoner.

"Wait," said Thornton, departing with a smile on his face.

Ten minutes later a cheery whistle rang down the corridor, a key grated in the lock and the door swung open.

An outstretched hand grasped that of the prisoner.

"Abel Jeffords, I feel that you have been punished enough for today."

The prisoner uttered a glad cry as Ross Ruddiford, in apparent good health, confronted him.

"Mercy me! Ross, I thought you was drowned. I haven't slept a night since I tumbled you under the keel of The Happy Hand. How——"

"Not too fast, Abel," broke in Ross with a low laugh. "Come with me and we can talk as we walk along."

Abel followed his old schoolmate into the open air. The prisoner inflated his lungs and uttered a suppressed whoop of joy.

"Don't get excited, Abel," warned his companion. "You may have to go to prison yet, you know. Your trial comes off in the morning."

"Oh, well, that's all right, you know," chuckled Abel. "I can willingly go anywhere, now that I know you are safe. Why, I have felt like a murderer all along, Ross."

"No need of that, Abel. I wasn't even hurt by my last tumble into the river. So you thought me drowned. Ha! Ha! Ha! Do you know, Abel, that's what I wanted you to think. I dived clear of the steamer's keel, swam under the water to a clump of willows, and from there crawled into the woods. You remember, it was getting dark under the trees, and in the excitement I got away undiscovered. I heard all the fuss you fellows made looking for me and that was revenge enough for the treatment I had received at your hands."

"Well, I'll be blessed!" ejaculated Abel.

"I hurried to town and saw Magistrate Saunders, who issued the warrant for you, and urged the deputy to serve it last night for fear you would escape: It was done. Now all I ask of you is to promise to appear at ten tomorrow morning for examination and I'll not detain you longer."

"You're mighty good to me all at once, Ross."

"That's because I wish to be fair. If that dynamite business hadn't been done Rod might be free. But that must be answered for."

"That was a bad piece of business," admitted Abel.

"It was far too bad to go unpunished."

"But you can't think so hard of Rod, Ross?"

"I am not sure. It coincides with threats he made in letters to me."

"But there was Sam Dallard——"

"Yes, he was one of the dynamiters. I'd give a good deal to get my hands on him; but he's skipped the country. The sheriff is tracking him, however, and I expect soon to hear a good report. I do hope that Rod may be able to clear his skirts."

"Oh, he will, and so will old Sam, never you fear."

"The proof is positive as regards Sam. He was caught in the act. He will certainly go up for ten years at the every least," declared Ross.

"Poor old Sam," sighed Abel.

The two parted at Hilltop gate. Ross went in to meet Mrs. Contrad, who faced him with white face and trembling limbs. Something terrible must have happened to cause this well balanced lady such agitation.

CHAPTER XIV.

MRS. CONTRAD'S REVELATION.

"What is wrong, Mrs. Contrad?" queried the heir as he entered the room and tossed his hat into the corner of the whatnot. "I hope to mercy there's no more bad news."

"There is, for you, Ross."

"Please sit down, Mrs. Contrad."

Ross waited impatiently for her to speak. The lady did not sit but leaned an arm against the back of a big chair and looked keenly at the flushed face of her boy friend.

"Go ahead, Mrs. Contrad," cried the boy impatiently.

"Did it ever occur to you that your father left a will, Ross?"

"Why no, of course not. I was the only heir anyhow, so there could have been no object in father's doing anything like that."

"Sometimes rich men have peculiar ideas, Ross."

"Suppose they have, my father wasn't that kind. But why do you talk like this? What is the trouble? Was there a will?"

"Yes, there was."

The speaker was white and agitated. Her companion noted this and was himself very much puzzled. He had known the lady since he was a child in pinafores, and had always regarded her with great awe and deep respect.

Of late the awe had become softened and the two were more companionable. Ross allowed her to manage the household affairs as suited her tastes, never questioning anything she did. This mention of a will surprised and annoyed him. It seems that she had not been entirely frank with him.

"I am surprised," finally articulated the boy. "What was in the will?"

"Much that concerns you, my boy."

"Very likely," with a frown. "I don't see why it wasn't produced at the time of the settlement of the estate."

"It ought to have been, but——"

"But what?"

"Well, to tell the truth, the paper was mislaid, lost—destroyed those thought who were witnesses to the document, one of whom being Rev. Dallard. You understand——"

"No, I do not understand," broke in the boy, petulantly. His annoyances of late had got on his nerves. "If the will was lost why isn't that the same as though it were destroyed?"

"There's a difference. It was afterward found."

"But it wasn't produced."

"No, it was not. After the estate had been amicably settled, I thought it a pity to tear things up again."

"Ah, you thought so?"

"Yes, for it was I who found the will."

"And failed to produce it?"

"That's the fact of which I am now repenting," and the woman sighed deeply, turning her gaze aside.

"Please show me the paper as quick as you can. I am impatient to see it and learn the worst. Is it so very bad? Am I left without a foot to stand on, Mrs. Contrad?"

"No indeed, but——"

"Well?"

"You are not the sole legatee."

"Well indeed! Who else— "

"I cannot tell you just yet."

"Why not?"

"Because, you see, the will has again disappeared, and should it never turn up what would be the use of making its contents known?"

Mrs. Contrad had grown calm. She edged to the big chair and sat down. Her companion bit his lip. He was vexed and puzzled.

"If it was a genuine expression of my father's wishes," said he, "there would be great use of stating what it conveyed."

"But you would not be bound by a will that could not be produced."

"Perhaps not legally bound, morally I should be."

The boy lifted his chin and regarded the woman keenly. There was something in his face she had never seen there before, the outspeak of a genuine manly nature and it almost startled her.

"It is your duty to speak out and tell what was in the will, Mrs. Contrad," he went on when he saw that she was not going to reply. "If there is any one on earth my father wished to help I ought to know it."

"Would you take my word for it, Master Ruddiford?"

The woman smiled incredulously. Ross noted this and resented it.

"I wouldn't have to, although I believe you would do nothing wrong, Mrs. Contrad. There are witnesses you see."

"Yes. The Rev. Dallard is the only one living. Still I cannot speak just yet."

"Why then did you mention this to me?" he cried half angrily. "I've got enough to bear without anything more. I do think—"

"One minute," she protested as Ross sprang to his feet and began walking about like a caged lion.

"Yes, Mrs. Contrad?" He turned and faced her, his eyes gleaming sharply.

"I have been the custodian of your father's will for nearly a year. I am willing to acknowledge that I did wrong in not producing it, but I somehow hesitated about reopening the estate business, and now the will has been stolen. To what purpose it will be put I do not know. The thief may come around and offer to negotiate for its sale to you, Ross."

"Let him, the scamp. I don't understand

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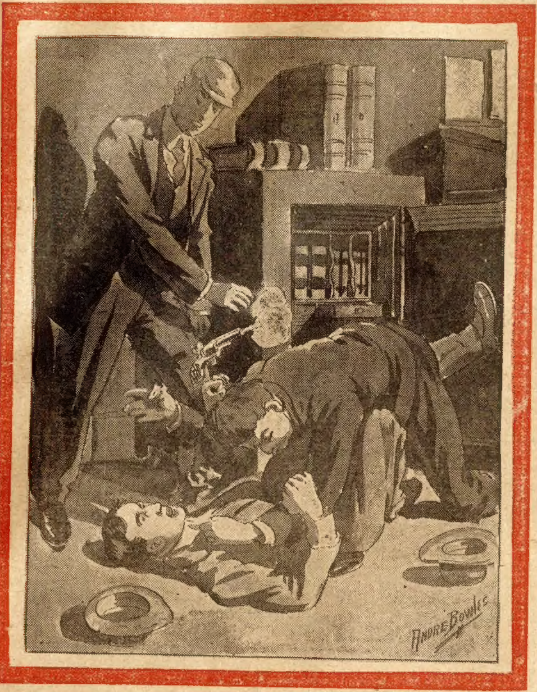

The weapon was brushed aside.

some things you tell me, Mrs. Contrad, nor shall I try. It was wrong in you to keep silent when you knew of the will."

"Was it any more so than for Rev. Dallard to do so?"

The face of the woman flushed as she spoke in her own defense.

"Perhaps not, but he may have imagined father destroyed a will made so long ago. Another thing. You have no right to keep its contents a secret even now."

"I have my reasons, sir."

The woman tossed her head haughtily, and Ross seemed silenced.

"Have you any clew to the thief, Mrs. Contrad?" he asked.

"Yes, and no."

"That's indefinite."

"Samuel Dallard was in the house last night."

"True, but only in the hall and basement. Surely you cannot connect him with the disappearance of that paper?"

"It was safe in a small box in my boudoir until now. I missed it this morning. I cannot help thinking Samuel may have got into that room and found the box, which has been tampered with. Of course my suspicions may be untenable——"

"They're not, Mrs. Contrad," cried Ross quickly. "That parson's son is capable of any villainy. He was the leader of the dynamite gang that destroyed my pierhouse and wing boom. A bit of thieving wouldn't hurt his elastic conscience in the least. Let it rest for the present, madam. The sheriff has a warrant and will nab Master Sam before he is many days older."

Ross went from the room.

"Why did I secrete the will?" muttered Mrs. Contrad. "Ah, Ross Ruddiford, I would not tell you for the world. It was a guilty weakness on my part. Nell does not even suspect how I have sinned to save the great fortune left by Donald Ruddiford intact for him and her. It's been a burdensome secret too. Ross is at swords' points with my Nell, while she seems to like that wicked preacher's son. I am sorry I had to tell about the will. It was the only way, since I am convinced that Sam Dallard has got it and will show it to his father."

"Hello! mamma," exclaimed a voice, and Nell swept into the room clad for a drive. "Who was it talking? I am sure I heard voices."

"It was Mr. Ruddiford. He has just gone."

"Oh," with a sniff. "Ross is unsufferable. "He'll get himself into hot water for what he has done today, see if he doesn't."

The girl tripped away.

"Such goings on," muttered Mrs. Contrad. "How everything goes at sixes and sevens. Why can't they like each other, my Nell and Ross?"

Some hours later, as the sun was dipping below the horizon, Ross Ruddiford walked over toward the Golding cottage. He was in deep thought.

There was much to perplex and annoy. The loss he had sustained was comparatively small, and yet it would never do to permit the perpetrators go free. The young heir was really sorry for his prisoner, old Captain Marand's son. It was quite true, as Abel Jeffords had said, the younger Marand was unable to live unless he could operate his steamer.

The Marands had been unfortunate, and still the old captain had once been the elder Ruddiford's bosom friend. In later life a quarrel had separated them, and death had not bridged the enmity.

This river war was but the outcropping of an old feud. Ross felt that he was not quite in the right, and yet, when he thought of the work of the dynamiter, he compressed his lips and grew sullen.

"Oh, Ross, Ross, I am glad it's you!"

A girl came pantingly up the incline and faced the heir of Hilltop.

"I—I've heard something awful and I want to tell you about it!"

CHAPTER XV.

A BATTLE IN THE DARK.

It was Pert Golding who almost knelt at the feet of the heir of Hilltop.

"What is the matter, Pert? You seem frightened. Calm yourself. I was on my way to your house and will listen to you after we get there."

He took her hand and attempted to lead her. She drew away with a little gasp.

"I—I would rather talk here," she said swiftly. "It can't wait, what I have to tell. It is almost night and the villains may come at any time now."

"Well-a-day!" exclaimed he. "More villainy on tap! It beats my first wife's relations all to pieces. Let's have it, Pert!"

The girl gazed apprehensively over her shoulder and trembled.

"I saw them over yonder by that old shanty, the one Hermit Hossick died in."

"Yes, to be sure."

"There were two men, grizzled fellows, and they are going to break into the mill office tonight and rob the safe!"

"Did you hear them say this, Patricia Golding?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"And that's what frightened you so?"

"That and the looks of the two men," avowed the girl. She was still trembling, and it required a soothing word from Ross as well as his arm to quiet her agitation.

Don't tremble so, little girl," he said gently. "There's no actual danger. Now that I know what is in the wind, there'll be no safe robbing tonight. I wonder if it's some more of the Deltan scoundrelism."

"I don't know. No, it can't be—and yet—"

"Well, Pert, tell me all about it, there's time enough, and not the least danger to any one."

"You remember what I heard before?"

"About that dynamite affair, yes."

"Well, I think these are the same ones. Their voices sounded the same."

Ruddiford's heart gave a leap. He bit his lip to keep back an angry word.

"No doubt," he said, cool as ice.

"They expect to use dynamite this time. I was so fearful of being discovered that I didn't stop to hear all they said. You see, I went to the ruined shanty to look for a portemonnaie that I lost a few days ago. I had hunted everywhere, and finally remembered being at the shanty one day with Daisy Dole, and thought I might have dropped it there. There was only a few dimes in the purse, but I didn't like to lose it 'cause it—the portemonnaie—was a present to me."

"Precisely."

"Well, while I was about to go inside I heard voices. I peeped in through a crack from the rear and saw two men crouching on a box talking in low tones. I listened when I heard your name, Ross."

"Nothing wrong in that, Pert."

"I am glad you think so, Ross. I soon heard the whole bad plot, and I rushed away to tell some one. I am glad you came along first."

"So am I. Now you saw these two men, Pert. You must have recognized them. Was one Sam Dallard?"

A grave suspicion had occupied Ruddiford's mind while the girl was telling her story. He was anxious to find added evidence against the parson's son.

"My, no," with a gasp. "You couldn't think he would be so wicked?"

"Yes, he is that wicked, Pert. He was one of the dynamiters at the boom. He is even now a fugitive from justice. I heard that he was at your house this morning, that is why I decided to call tonight."

"Yes, he was there, but he went away before noon. He didn't act like one who had done anything bad, Ross. I know he said you was down on him, but that there was a mistake——"

"No mistake at all, Pert. Sam Dallard was one of the dynamiters last night, and he is fleeing a warrant in the hands of the sheriff. But let him go for the present. I will see you safe home, then turn my attention to those plotting scoundrels."

Ross walked on slowly with Patricia at his side.

The two were the best of friends, although Mrs. Golding had intimated that the elder Ruddiford was not a good man, and that she feared his son was off the same piece. There had been a romance in the life of Alphena Golding of which few knew anything about, not even her daughter. This was a scrap from her girl life way back in Pennsylvania and was never referred to by the little "washer-lady."

Ross declined the girl's invitation to come in, but turned to retrace his steps.

"Don't go to the old hermit's shack, Ross," called Pert after him.

The call boy made no reply but hastened up the rise and was soon lost to view.

"I hope he won't go there," murmured the girl. "Them awful men would as soon murder him as they would to eat a meal of victuals."

"What's that, Butterfly?"

Dick came around the house and faced the girl on the cottage step.

The little factotum was as jolly as ever, and often teased Pert till she was ready to fight or to cry.

"Nothing at all, sir," returned the girl.

"Oh, but it is something. I saw Mr. Ruddiford with you. I don't think I shall permit His Mightiness to call here many more times. He's getting too familiar. You want to look out for him, Patricia."

"I wonder if that's so."

"It is a fact——"

The sound of a sharply slammed door cut short his words. Dick stood alone in the dulled light.

"Well, by gumption, I don't like this. What does Ross Ruddiford care for the washer woman's girl? Not a thing," Dick shook his curly head and stepped away towards the stable where the widow's one cow was mooing to be milked.

Ross Ruddiford did go to the old ruin despite the warning of Pert. He found only an empty shack, however.

The boy mill owner smiled when he thought of Pert's story.

He adjudged the alarm a false one, and resolved to ignore it. Upon second thought, however, and after a talk with Contrad, he decided to watch the mill office that night in company with his foreman.

It was well that they did so. Near the hour of midnight a sound attracted the notice of the two hidden in the office, which was in the second story, and overlooked a swift stream of water.

Ross crept to the window. Some one had placed a ladder to this and was mounting upward. What if it should prove to be Sam Dallard! The thought almost choked the boy watcher. He still had a kindly feeling for his old schoolmate despite his late acts of enmity.

Ross stepped aside and crouched in a corner opposite the one occupied by the safe. Soon a window was raised and a head thrust into the room. A moment of hesitancy then the night-prowler crawled across the sill and stood in the room. He stood silent till a companion followed. The two approached the safe.

"No need of dynamite this time, Sam," said a voice.

"Not if you have the combination, Griggs."

"I've got it all right, old man. We'll make short work of this biz. If the money the boss fetched in three days ago is still here we're in for a big haul."

Griggs!

The crouching Ross almost uttered a cry. He was thunderstruck. The voice confirmed the name. Griggs was his bookkeeper! And his companion must be Sam Dallard!

Presently a dark lantern cast its glare upon the faces of the burglars. Yes, Griggs was there, but the face of the other was invisible behind the bookkeeper's shoulder.

"Hist!"

The two villains started as the safe door swung noiselessly aside. Both rose to their feet, one flashing a revolver. Contrad and Ross sprang upon the robbers. Even as the contest raged a third man mounted the ladder and sprang across the low window sill.

Ross was down with a revolver muzzle pressed against his temple as the newcomer entered. With a sweep of his hand the weapon was brushed aside. It exploded savagely. A wail of agony followed.

The bookkeeper had received the bullet. The last comer had saved the master of Hilltop from death. With this fresh arrival Ross and Contrad soon had the burglar under control. Contrad turned on the light of his own lantern. It was but the work of a few minutes to bind the unhurt villain with buckskin belt cords.

When Ross turned to face the person who had come to the rescue in the nick of time, he uttered a surprised cry.

"You, Sam Dallard!" ejaculated Ruddiford.

"It seems so, Ross," returned the parson's son. "I heard a racket, saw a light and mounted in time to help you out."

"I should say so," uttered the boy mill owner; and yet there was a ring of doubt and distress in his husky voice.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REVELATIONS OF A WILL.

There were two more prisoners in the village jail the next morning. One of these was the burglar whom our friends had captured, the other Sam Dallard, who had made no attempt to escape when the sheriff found him on the street as smiling and happy as if nothing had happened.

The sheriff snapped the handcuffs over the wrists of the parson's son and led him past Hilltop.

Ross was out and at once intercepted officer and prisoner. The heir's face was white with feeling.

"I am sorry for this, Sam," said Ross.

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Men in all parts of this country who suffered in one way or another from symptoms resulting from overwork, youthful errors, indiscretions or excesses, such as nervousness, losses, weak manhood, poor memory, lost vitality, lack of ambition, depression, bashfulness, pain in the back, general debility, etc., have taken advantage of my offer, and I have received hundreds of unsolicited letters from men, young and old, in all walks of life, saying that they had also become cured. The prescription calls for a combination of powerful but perfectly safe ingredients, and is so written that you can get it filled in a good drug store at small cost. I send nothing C.O.D. and I have no scheme of any kind to get your money or sell you medicine that you don't want, and if you do not find me honest in every way, you are at liberty to expose me in this paper.

This notice may not appear again, therefore write me today and get a copy of my prescription and necessary information free by return mail. I will also inform you how I can make this offer without any loss to me. Address

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COOK REMEDY CO,

1730 65 STATE ST., CHICAGO, U.S.A.

When answering advertisements you will favor the advertiser and the publishers by mentioning The Chicago Ledger.

"You saved my life last night. That shall mitigate your offense if I can have my way. Don't think I am ungrateful, only——"

"No time for talk," broke in the officer, leading his prisoner away.

Ross stood alone. He watched the sheriff lead his prisoner, handcuffed to jail. A sigh escaped his lips. Down at his own dock still lay The Happy Hand, the building of which had caused all the trouble.

Ross Ruddiford, accompanied by Contrad, was on hand at ten at the magistrate's office. Rodney Marand was led in, charged with dynamiting the boom house.

A crowd surrounded the place. The crew of The Happy Hand were here anxious to rescue their captain. The evidence against the prisoner was the incriminating letters held by Ruddiford. These, together with the evidence of Bob Simon and Dick Dingle served to fasten strong suspicion on the prisoner.

"I shall have to hold you to the circuit court for trial," was the decision of Magistrate Saunders.

To the surprise of everybody Contrad, under instructions from his employer, furnished bail and Marand was released to appear a week later at Warren for trial.

"Beg pardon, but I want you, sir."

The deputy sheriff tapped the arm of Marand as he stepped into the street.

"I have to serve a warrant for one Rodney Marand, captain of the steamer The Happy Hand, for maliciously, with malice aforethought, tearing down and destroying a bridge."

There was more of course, but this was enough. Marand had to take his medicine and he again found himself in jail. The people of Logdale had resolved to punish some one for the destruction of the river bridge.

"By gracious, this is tough," said Dick to Rodney. "You didn't order that done; you couldn't while in Hilltop house a prisoner."

"No, nor do I approve of the work," began Rodney.

At this moment a stalwart young fellow broke from the crowd of Happy Handers and rushed to the officer's side. It was Mate Jeffords.

"I am the bridge fiend!" he exclaimed, laughing shrilly. "I am already under arrest. Rod is innocent. You can't—"

"But I can and have arrested this chap," declared the officer. "Captain Marand is the chief offender; you were working under his orders. You may both be punished for the crime."

"Let us have our examination now, then," demanded Marand.

At this moment Nell Contrad came walking to her father, white and apparently very much alarmed.

"That bookkeeper is dying and wants to see Mr. Ruddiford and you, papa."

The two at once hurried from the place. Magistrate Saunders adjourned court till afternoon. Jeffords was permitted his freedom, but Rodney Marand was again landed in jail. Here Sam Dallard was chafing angrily.

"Where is Dick?" he asked of the deputy sheriff.

"That's more'n I know. He's like a flea, you never can tell where to find him."

Sam and Rodney now occupied one cell. The jail was small, only two cells, and the burglar was in the other.

"By gracious, why don't Dick do something," grated Sam after the jailer had locked them in."

"Dick? What can he do?" asked Rodney.

"A good deal if he had his wits about him."

Dick did not come, however. He had returned home and was in consultation with Pert and her mother. There was a sealed packet left in his hands by Sam Dallard, and it was of this they were talking.

Meantime other important events were taking place. Contrad and Ross were in the sick room with the bookkeeper, who made a startling confession, thinking he was about to die.

At noon a surprising thing met the prisoners, two of them at least. Ross Ruddiford and his foreman called at the jail. A few minutes talk with the jailer served to set Sam and Rodney free.

"It seems all right about the first charge," admitted the officer; "but there's the bridge you know. Marand is guilty there, or his men are, and——"

"I will stand for the bridge affair," interrupted the heir haughtily. "I think my word ought to suffice. If not, Captain Marand will appear at the hour and answer to the charge. I'll see to that."

The deputy sheriff assented and the four left the jail in company.

"Now then, what is all this about, Ross, old chap?" queried Rodney.

"It's about you and Sam here. I want to apologize for my bumptiousness. Can you fellows forgive me for making a fool of myself?"

The speaker extended a hand to each, his face glowing with feeling. Contrad stood aside, silent yet appreciative.

"To you, Sam Dallard, I owe an abject apology. Why? Because, while you stood by my interests like a hero, I have been misusing you like a dog. Don't say a thing till I am through. I was sure all along that Sam had a hand in dynamiting the boom-house and in cutting the wing boom. All has been cleared up. Bookkeeper Griggs is dying, and has made a full confession. It was he who plotted to destroy my property and to rob the mill office. It seems he is a hardened villain. His object was to turn attention away from Hilltop so that he might rob the house and mill. He became frightened that first night, and by you, Sam Dallard."

"True," said the parson's son. "I caught the rascals at the boom, and was trying to defeat their purpose, which is how I came to be seen there."

"That is as Griggs stated it. His comrade in crime, now jailed here, bears the name of Sam, and that is how Bob Simon and Dick got mixed on names. Let it drop. Come home with me, both of you. Sam saved my life last night, and you, Rod, are guiltless of that dynamite job. I feel relieved, for I hated to feel ugly and edgewise at an old friend like you, Rod."

The speaker pressed Marand's hand, while tears started to his eyes.

"That's all right, Ross. I've never felt mad at you, only——"

"Only you thought you had a right to run the river with your steamer. You have, Rod, you have, and I am going to contrive somehow to keep my part of the stream clear, bet your boots on that."

"Thank you, Ross. Our fathers were once the best of friends."

"They were, and my father, before he left us, confessed that he had not been just with his old comrade of Delta. Come home with me, lads, and let me show you how a repentant sinner can treat his best friends."

"There's the bridge," said Rod, as the four walked toward Hilltop. "I am not very well heeled, but I shall try to pay all the damage. I do not blame Abel for that. He was mad about my capture, and under the impulse of the moment he tore his way through."

"Never mind the old bridge," cried Ross. "I shall make that good."

"Not with your money. I——"

"Stop right where you are, Rod, old chap, and come with me and see what a boss dinner Nell and her mother have prepared for the Rogues of Rogue River."

The dinner was over, the finest spread the boys had ever faced, and Ross was leading the way to the smoking room when who should appear but Dick and Pert, dressed in their best.

"All hail three dusty rogues!" exclaimed Dick, waving something aloft.

The thing Dick Dingle held was the stolen will, which he placed in the hand of Sam Dallard. The parson's son turned the envelope over to the host.

The face of Mrs. Contrad flushed, then went white.

"The stolen will!" she cried.

"You are right there, Mrs. Contrad," said Sam Dallard, blushing shamefacedly. "I am the thief. I found the paper while snooping about that night when the whole mill gang was hunting me for a supposed crime. I think it right to have the will read, don't you, Mrs. Contrad?"

"Yes," faintly.

"Permit me," and Cool Contrad held out his hand. "I as administrator am the one to look at this." Ross turned over the envelope while the foreman's wife shrank from the room.

Tearing open the envelope Contrad produced a rustling legal document which proved to be the last will and testament of Colonel Ruddiford.

"This puts a somewhat different face on affairs at Logdale," muttered the gentlemen as he read the document first to himself and then aloud. There were two items in the will that astonished them all, and caused Pert to clasp her hands and breathe a fervent "amen."

"To my well loved friend and neighbor, Rodney Marand of Delta, I give and bequeath the sum of fifty thousand dollars." Then followed some few lesser bequests. All the property at Logdale, mills, lands and moneys, were given to Ross, to be held in charge by Cool Contrad till said son came of age, excepting the sum of ten thousand dollars, which I give and bequeath to the friend of my early youth, Alphena Oakes Golding!"

This was the item which set Pert into estacies and caused Dick to exclaim:

"Holy smoke!" and cast an admiring look toward Patricia.

"Now," said Mr. Contrad, this will must be probated unless you decide to file a protest, Ross Ruddiford."

"There can be no doubt of its genuineness," said the heir.

"None whatever. The names of Elder Dallard and Squire Gurling as witnessess are genuine. I knew there was a will. It was lost, perhaps destroyed, so I held my peace. Now, as to a contest——"

"There'll be no contest!" exclaimed the heir of Hilltop, turning toward Rodney. "My father was just at last to his old neighbor. Allow me to congratulate you, my old friend."

"This seems too good to be true," murmured the captain of the Happy Hand, with falling tears.

"It is true all the same, and this is the happiest moment of my life. I congratulate you, too, Patricia."

The girl ran forward, and Ross shook her hand also.

"What a moist time!" ejaculated Dick. "Say, Sam, ain't this great! Here are all the brave fighters, the leaders of all the rogues on Rogue River, making reg'lar meeting houses out of themselves in being good. What's to become of the war that was to devastate the river from Warren to Delta, I should like to know? No show for me to win a medal in battle as I see."

"I reckon the war is over," said Sam Dallard with a laugh.

"It is so far as I am concerned," declared Rodney. "My, won't father feel good when he hears what the man he loved did for him. I wonder why this will was smothered so long."

"I'll tell you why."

Mrs. Contrad glided into the room and made a full confession, not however, giving her true reason for acting as she did.

"Say," said Dick, as he walked home with Patricia, "I know now why your ma was so bitter sometimes against old Colonel Ruddiford."

"Why, Dick?"

"Because she was an old sweetheart of his, way back in old Pennsylvania."

Pert blushed and smiled but made no reply.

The Rogue River war came to a sudden end. Rodney drew off his boat and entered into business life with his father. Griggs, the criminal bookkeeper, did not die. He got a term in prison as did his partner.

The bridge at Logdale was rebuilt. Ross footed the bill, refusing to permit his friend Rodney to spend a cent in that direction.

"Of all the rogues on the river I believe I have been the chief," laughingly remarked Ross to his friends.

Some years later Patricia became mistress of Hilltop. Dick quitted the country with a broken heart, while Sam Dallard, now an eloquent preacher, has for a wife the pretty, willful Nell Contrad.

The end.

RAILROAD MAN

Didn't Like Being Starved.

A man running on a railroad has to be in good condition all the time or he is liable to do harm to himself and others.

A clear head is necessary to run a locomotive or conduct a train. Even a railroad man's appetite and digestion are matters of importance, as the clear brain and steady hand result from the healthy appetite followed by the proper digestion of food.

"For the past five years," writes a railroader, "I have been constantly troubled with indigestion. Every doctor I consulted seemed to want to starve me to death. First I was dieted on warm water and toast until I was almost starved; then, when they would let me eat, the indigestion would be right back again.

"Only temporary relief came from remedies, and I tried about all of them I saw advertised. About three months ago a friend advised me to try Grape-Nuts food. The very first day I noticed that my appetite was satisfied which had not been the case before, that I can remember.

"In a week, I believe, I had more energy than ever before in my life. I have gained seven pounds and have not had a touch of indigestion since I have been eating Grape-Nuts. When my wife saw how much good this food was doing me she thought she would try it awhile. We believe the discoverer of Grape-Nuts found the 'Perfect Food.'"

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Couldn't Figure It Out.

He climbed off the car in East Cleveland the other night, or, to be exact, the other morning, and proceeded toward his modest little home down a pretty side street.

As soon as he reached the sidewalk he tried to walk along the edge and ascertain if he was still able to navigate along a straight line.

"I'm th' only man that wuz in the bunch t'night that c'n walksh straight's that," he muttered to himself with pardonable pride when he found that he could move along first rate.

A moment later he saw a suspicious looking man following him.

"That fellesh goin' t' try t' rob muh," he muttered. He felt in his trousers pocket and only found a crumpled $2 bill, but it was all he had left after the evening's entertainment, and he didn't want to lose it.

Then he reflected that probably the stranger following him wasn't thinking of robbing him at all. But to make sure that they didn't have any trouble he crossed the street. A minute later he looked about. The man behind him had crossed over, too.

Once again the man with the $2 bill crossed the street. He hated to look around for a time lest his worst fears be substantiated. When he did turn his head his pursuer was not far behind him. He had crossed the street again.

The man ahead clutched tightly his $2 bill, dear to him because it was all that remained of what had been a roll the size of a blacksmith's forearm, and started to cross over once more, for he happened to think that he lived on the other side of the street anyhow, but he hadn't reached the middle of the street when he looked back and noted that his pursuer was also crossing over.

He stopped right there, pulled out his $2 bill and watch and held it toward the man behind him. "Here's all I've got, old man," says he, now perfectly sobered by his fright. "Take it, but lemme alone. My wife's worried about me, anyway, and if I go in the house with my face all bunged up I'll get thrown out."

"Why, you darn fool!" grunted the other man as he brushed on by, "I'm the man that goes around to turn out the street lights."

He Was No Hero.

"I had my vacation," said the Brooklyn drummer, "and I went down on the north shore of Long Island, where I was told that there was good fishing. I found the statement true. I could catch fish until tired of pulling them in over the gunwale of the boat. One day before starting into town to the postoffice I caught 20 pounds of the nicest sea bass you ever laid eyes on, and I took 'em along as a present to the hotel man.

"On the way to town I met a dozen farmers and held the fish up for inspection, but not one stopped or took a second look at the string. When I reached the hotel there were about fifteen men loafing on the veranda. I made a great fuss about taking the fish from the wagon, but not a man asked a question. When the hotel man came forward I presented him with the beauties, and he told the hostler to take them out to the barnyard. I couldn't make the folks out at all, and kept getting madder and madder, and finally said to mine host:

"Look here, I brought you some fish."

"Yes."

"They are beauties."

"Yes."

"But not a durned critter of you have as much as looked at them. What in thunder ails this crowd, anyhow?"

"Softly, softly," whispered the landlord in reply. "If you had brought those fish yesterday you would have been a hero, but last night Jim Taylor killed the biggest skunk you ever saw, and we won't be through admiring him for at least three days to come!"

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhœa, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address Mrs. A. Hudnut South Bend, Indiana.

THEY ALONE.

Does it tease you, little woman,
  When you're told
You're in love by some one elder,
  Over-bold?

Well, it oughtn't, that is certain!
  Heavens above,
They alone should be ashamed who
  Do not love!

BETTY'S BANK BURGLARY.

BY CLARENCE HINES.

Betty fastened her veil and caught up her pocketbook. If she hurried she would catch the trolley that would take her to town in time for the matinee.

She was to meet her mother in the lobby. Mrs. Mace had gone into town to shop earlier in the morning.

She hurried along the shady street and just as she reached the bridge she heard the hum of the trolley and quickened her pace into a run.

There was a loose plank on the footwalk against which she stumbled and went sprawling against the muddy boards, while the tiny pocketbook flew from her grasp and went spinning across the planks and into the river below.

The little suburban street was deserted and there was no one to help her, so Betty picked herself up and ruefully surveyed her muddied skirt. It could be cleaned presently, when it had dried, and she turned and trudged back to the house.

It was not until she passed up the walk that she realized with a gasp that her keys were in her purse and every door was locked. She could not sit out there until her mother returned in the evening, and after fruitlessly trying the front door she slipped around to the rear and climbed through a kitchen window, thankful that she had forgotten to lock it when she went out.

The skirt was drying nicely. It would brush off easily in a few minutes and meanwhile she could consider the question of car fare.

There was not a penny to be found in any likely place and there was no hope that she could borrow the money at some store. The Maces had moved in only the week before and Betty had come only that morning.

Not a soul in Chester knew her and she was in despair until her glance fell upon Bobby's toy bank.

It was a cheap iron affair. She could get him another up in town and pay back the car fare with interest. She slipped out of the back door and into the woodshed. She placed the bank upon the block and raised the ax.

But the blow never fell, for a hand grasped her wrist and a stern voice demanded her surrender. She turned to face a clean-cut young fellow whose clear blue eyes were crowded with disgust.

"I've heard of stealing pennies from a child's bank," he said, "but I never believed that there was such depths of meanness."

"But I had to," she explained. "I am to meet my mother in town for the matinee and I lost all my money."

"Very neat," he commented, "but it doesn't go. Mrs. Mace asked me this morning to look after the house, explaining that she would be away all day. She has no daughter, just a little boy whose bank you are stealing."

"You don't believe that I am a thief, do you?" demanded Betty. "What right have you to say such things?"

"When you try to force the front door and finding that resists your efforts climb in a window, the inference is obvious," he suggested.

"But I lost my keys with my money," she explained. "I was running across the bridge and I fell, and my purse slipped into the river."

"Very ingenious," he admitted, "but there has been an epidemic of sneak thievery in Chester lately, and I should not be surprised to find that I have located the culprit."

"Are you going to arrest me?" she cried in terror. "Won't you wait until mother comes home?"

He scoffed at the suggestion, but in the end her earnestness half convinced him, and he grudgingly consented to wait. Betty led the way to the parlor, whither the stranger, still carrying the bank, followed.

It was not long before she convinced him that a mistake had been made, but by then they had grown so interested in their chat that both forgot the matinee.

He was George Hawley, he told her. He lived with his mother next door to the Mace cottage. Betty began to tell more about herself, and almost before they realized how time was passing there came a rattle of keys in the lock, and Mrs. Mace hurried into the room, dragging the reluctant Bobby by the hand.

Her white, drawn face relaxed as she caught sight of Betty.

"Well, I declare," she panted, as she dropped into a seat. "Here I've been hurrying back from town thinking that you had been murdered by the sneak thieves, and there you sit as comfortable as you please, talking with Mr. Hawley. I sold the man in the ticket office our seats, and Bobby cried all the way home because he missed the show."

"It is all my fault," declared Gregory. "I never knew you had a daughter and you told me that the house would be closed this afternoon. So when I saw a young woman climb into the kitchen window and presently emerge with a toy bank and go into the woodshed with it, I flew to the rescue of the banking institution."

"I guess it's nobody's fault," laughed Mrs. Mace when the situation had been fully explained. "It's one of those things that's just bound to happen."

"All the same," the man said, "I think it should be my privilege to make up to Bobby for his disappointment of this afternoon. Mother and I were going to the theater this evening. Let's make it a party."

Late that evening Betty and Gregory stood at the gate. Her mother and Bobby had already gone inside and Mrs. Hawley had passed on to her own home.

"Thanks for a very pleasant evening," she said, as her hand rested in his. "I am glad you captured me."

"I'm sorry I did not make a more permanent prisoner," he said as he turned away. "Perhaps next time I shall be more successful."

But when he did make his second capture it was a ring, not manacles, that he used, and Betty was a most willing prisoner.

His Business Instinct.

"Nothing succeeds like perseverance," said Mark Twain at a dinner. "When the luck seems most against us, then we should work and hope hardest of all. In moments of discouragement let us remember my old friend, Henry Plumley of Virginia City.

"Henry Plumley ran a collar factory. Times were reputed to be hard with him. When his factory, which was heavily insured, burned down there was every indication that he had set the place on fire himself in order to get the insurance money. Virginia City was the soul of honor in those days. Shocked beyond words, it rose en masse, seized Henry Plumley, put a halter round his neck and lynched him.

"But he did not die. The sheriff arrived and cut him down in time. He was tried and found guilty and he served a term in jail.

"On his release you wouldn't have thought that he'd return to Virginia City again, eh? He did, though. He came back, reopened his collar factory and prospered.

"What gave him his start was the odd advertisement with which he announced his return to business among us. Preceded by a brass band, Henry in a great gilt chariot, burst upon our streets. He sat on a kind of golden throne, and he held on a crimson cushion in his lap an old collar. Above the collar on a crimson banner waved this inscription in huge letters of gold:

"'This is the collar we wore when we were lynched. It saved our life. Be wise in time and use no other. At all retailers. Ten cents apiece, three for a quarter.'"

The Old Man's Money.

"Did you hear 'bout the old man's experience in the bankin' business?"

"No; what was it?"

"Why, he put $60 in bank—first money he'd ever put there—an' the boys tol' him that he'd better keep an eye on the bank, as they failed mighty frequent, an' he wuz liable to lose all."

"Well?"

"Well, he hung 'round that bank so constant that the bank people got suspicious of him, an' thought he wuz goin' to blow the bank up; whenever he seen the cashier come out he followed him 'round town, always keepin' him in sight; an' it wuz the same way with the bank president, an' all the clerks; an' when he finally applied fer a job as janitor o' the institution—so's he could be on the spot in case o' trouble—they had him arrested, an' the judge decided that he wuz crazy an' they wuz jest 'bout to send him to a lunatic asylum when his friends explained things an' the bank folks give him his money, an' tol' him to git!"

Well Countered.

"Senator Beveridge," said a young physician, "addressed the class I was graduated from on our commencement day. He advised us in this address to be broad and generous in our views.

"He said he once saw two famous physicians introduced at a reception. They were deservedly famous, but they were of opposing schools; and the regular, as he shook the other by the hand, said loftily:

"'I am glad to meet you as a gentleman, sir, though I can't admit that you are a physician.'

"'And I,' said the homeopathist, smiling faintly, 'am glad to meet you as a physician, though I can't admit you are a gentleman.'"

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Such a round neck bodice as this one is very generally becoming.

5849 Blouse or Shirt Waist, 32 to 42 Bust.
To be made with long or three-quarter sleeves. The plain tailored waist never goes out of style.

5835 Fitted Corset Cover, 32 to 44 Bust.
The plain fitted corset cover suits many figures better than any other sort and is in fact the most desirable beneath any smoothly fitting gown.

5836 Girl's Dress, 6 to 12 Years.
An exceedingly pretty frock for little girls.

5795 Girl's Yoke Dress with Bertha, 6 to 12 Years.
To be made with round or high neck, with or without the bertha.

5831 Child's Empire Frock, 2, 4 and 6 Years.
With separate guimpe that can be made with short or long sleeves.

5820 Girl's Dress with Guimpe, 6 to 12 Years.
The guimpe can be made with either elbow or three-quarter sleeves.

5813 Girl's Coat, 8 to 14 Years.
Long loose coats make most becoming wraps for growing girl's and are to be noted in a variety of attractive colors and materials.

5796 Misses' Cutaway Coat, 14 and 16 Years.
Unquestionably cutaway coats are favorites of the season and many exceedingly smart variations are shown.

5793 Child's Coat with Shield, 2 to 6 Years.
The long coat, that covers the frock, is the favorite for little children and is worn in cloth of all colors, in velvet, velveteen, corduroy and cheviot.

5846 Boy's Shirt Waist, 4 to 12 Years.
To be made with attached roll-over or separate high collar.

5845 "Buster Brown" Suit, 2 to 8 Years.
There is no suit that the small boy wears that pleases him better than this one which is masculine enough to satisfy his ambitions while it is childish enough to please his mamma.

5847 Five Gored Skirt, 22 to 32 Waist.
To be made in round or walking length, with inverted plaits or habit back

5828 Seven Gored Skirt, 22 to 32 Waist.
The plain gored flared skirt is always a graceful and becoming one and this season will have extended vogue.

5792 Nine Gored Skirt with Panels, 22 to 30 Waist.
The skirt that is made with panels is a favorite among the latest models and has much to commend it.

5816 Seven Gored Skirt, 22 to 30 Waist.
It is eminently graceful, takes long and beautiful lines and can be trimmed to give the tunic, or shawl, suggestion very easily and readily.

5825 Semi-Fitted Coat, 34 to 42 Bust.
The semi-fitted coat is always a becoming and satisfactory one.

5797 Princess Gown, 32 to 40 Bust.
To be made in round or walking length. The princess gown always is a graceful and attractive one and just now it is high in favor with la mode.

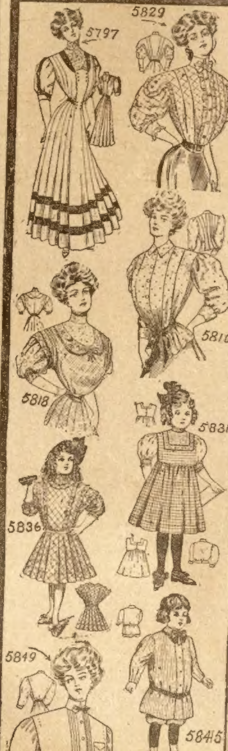
5810 Box Plaited House Jacket, 32 to 42 Bust.
To be made with three-quarter or long sleeves. Simple house jackets are always in demand for they fill a definite, practical need.

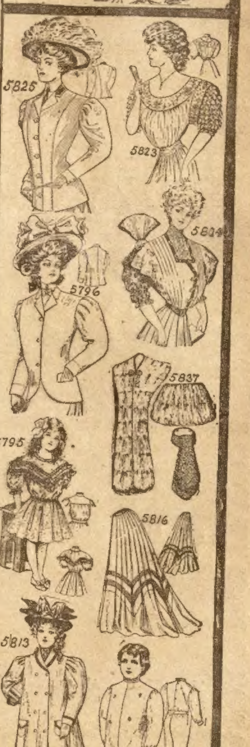
5818 Over Blouse or Jumper, 32 to 40 Bust.
The over blouse is made in one piece and is tucked over the shoulders, the sleeves being cut in one with it.

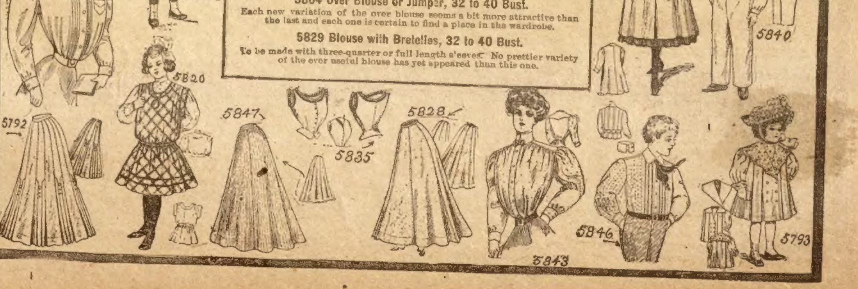
5843 Blouse or Shirt Waist, 32 to 42 Bust.
To be made with or without the yoke at back. The plain tailored shirt waist is always needed.

5804 Over Blouse or Jumper, 32 to 40 Bust.
Each new variation of the over blouse seems a bit more attractive than the last and each one is certain to find a place in the wardrobe.

5829 Blouse with Bretelles, 32 to 40 Bust.
To be made with three-quarter or full length sleeves. No prettier variety of the ever useful blouse has yet appeared than this one.







All Aboard.

Three Vermont farmers who own a mountain together have this fall cleared a track so that a sled can start from the top and go whizzing for almost two miles before coming to a stop. It is for the boys to slide down hill on when the snow comes, and there will be great fun—for once. Then, when the boys discover that they must walk two miles up hill and drag their sleds after them they won't feel quite so hilarious over it.

The Welfare of David.

In the course of a visit to a widow with a large family, a member of his congregation, a Scottish minister inquired how they all were. He was told they were all well excepting Davie, who was "troubled wi' a sair leg and no fit for work." The minister could not remember which was David, but in his prayer at parting, not liking to hurt the widow's feelings by showing his ignorance, prayed that David's "affliction might be blessed to him." When he reached home he asked his wife which of the widow's children was David.

"Dearie me!" she cried: "Davie's no a son; he's the cuddy" (donkey).

Ulysses S. Grant.

Ulysses S. Grant first went to school at Port Pleasant, Ohio. The school was a crude affair, which he attended only in winter and at other odd times when there was no work on his father's farm.

TORTURING Backache!—

(From the Chicago Inter Ocean of December 7.)

FINDS NEW KIDNEY CURE

Dr. T. Frank Lynott, New York Specialist, Discovers Remarkable Remedy.

At last a perfectly harmless and positive cure appears to have been found. Dr. T. Frank Lynott, formerly of the University City of New York and the famous Bellevue Hospital, New York City, but now a celebrated specialist in Chicago, has a very simple, quick-acting formula which has already been approved by the best doctors.

Last night Dr. Lynott read a paper on the treatment of kidney troubles that proved a revelation to those present. Dr. Lynott was highly praised for his deeply interesting paper, but is liable to criticism for allowing his new treatment to be advertised, especially as he was advertising a free treatment on an introductory offer.

Dr. Lynott, however, explained that this free treatment offer was not so much for patients in the big cities as for the people in villages and country districts who had access only to country doctors. Many of these country doctors, Dr. Lynott explained, were not posted on up-to-date methods of cure, and in fact were jealous of the more educated physicians in cities; so to make quick work of introducing the treatment that the **best** doctors must recognize as the proper remedy for kidney trouble, he had decided to offer it free for the time being to people in the country. Dr. Lynott said that the free treatments would not be continued indefinitely.

That racking pain, those awful twists of the muscles, that sharp digging soreness—digging right through the bones and flesh—all day long—half the night long—pain and misery unbearable—

THEN SUDDENLY—

such a relief, the back becomes straight and eased, the internal pains cease, the bones quit aching, the muscles stop twitching—health, strength, freedom, from all torture—as if by magic.

That is what can and will be done for you, if **YOU** will only take the time and trouble to read this free offer carefully. It is **YOUR** loss if you do not get the free treatment—it is your own self that you must blame if your torturing, twisting, digging pains do not cease. Now don't think that this is only an ordinary advertisement—it is a high grade scientific offer—a real free offer—especially for the readers of this paper, endorsed personally by the editor of this paper, and I do not want you to neglect this illness of yours one minute. I want you to get the free treatment and the free book, fully explaining your real illness. For, in the first place, you must understand that those internal pains and aches (a backache that comes from an ordinary twist or exposure and lasts only a few hours is not meant by this, but the chronic aches and pains) are due to

Kidney Trouble

Either Kidney Trouble itself, or Bladder Trouble, or Uric Acid leading to Rheumatism. All these diseases go back to the kidneys, and show themselves by internal pains, pains inside and by a racking of the back.

FREE TREATMENT!

The Free Treatment

if you answer this advertisement the first time you see it and send your name. An introductory offer for those who really want to get well and who, when cured, will not hesitate to tell their friends. Don't miss this wonderful liberal offer.

Doctor T. FRANK LYNOTT, whose picture appears here, will personally take charge of your case. He will give your case his personal attention, for he wants to take your case as an example for others. He wants to prove by you that his wonderful treatment is positively efficacious. You may have heard of Dr. Lynott's high standing in the profession and especially of his deep knowledge of urinary diseases (Dr. Lynott received a special diploma for study of urinary diseases from New York University) so the editor of this paper considers himself fortunate in having been able to offer Dr. Lynott's services absolutely free to the readers of this paper.

Fill out and mail this certificate now, TODAY.

Now we positively know that Dr. Lynott has THE remedy for kidney trouble that will do the work. This remedy—for the sake of humanity—ought to be introduced **at once** into every community of the United States. The easiest way to introduce it would be to establish one cure quickly, showing relief is instantaneous, how the cure is **certain.** So, a free treatment will be given to one person in each town. Just send your own name and address—that is all—and the free treatment will be promptly forwarded to you, also the free book explaining about backaches and all other symptoms of kidney trouble. Now remember that you are under no obligations—all you have to do is to send your name and YOU will get the free treatment. Then, after the treatment has helped you so much, you will, of course, be glad to tell all your friends about it—you are under no obligations to do so, but we know you will be glad to do it anyway. You would be grateful to us for the treatment and cure even if we had charged you half of a year's salary—it would be worth that much to you surely—but the treatment is absolutely free, prepaid. This is, of course, strictly an introductory offer—so be the first in your town to write. If you are suffering with any symptoms of kidney trouble or if any member of your family is so afflicted sign and mail the free trial certificate.

Any sick person who fails to write at once for this absolutely free treatment has no right to complain longer of illness. If you are seeking a cure, answer this liberal offer.— **The Editor.**

Here Is a Table of the Symptoms of Kidney Trouble.

READ OVER THESE SYMPTOMS

See which of the Symptoms are yours

It is important to state in your reply to Dr. Lynott what your symptoms are. Just as soon as the doctor receives your reply, either in a letter or on the free certificate shown below, he will send you the free treatment. Now do not miss this opportunity. Just imagine how you will feel as soon as you get the treatment. **You must** feel relief at once. So do not delay, but write a letter today stating what the symptoms are. Send this certificate at once to Dr. Lynott, Pontiac Building, Chicago.

1—Pain in the back.
2—Too frequent desire to urinate.
3—Burning or obstruction of urine.
4—Pain or soreness in the bladder.
5—Prostatic Trouble.
6—Gas or pain in the stomach.
7—General debility, weakness, dizziness.
8—Constipation or liver trouble.
9—Pain and soreness under right ribs.
10—Swelling in any part of the body.
11—Palpitation or pain around the heart.
12—Pain in the hip joint.
13—Pain in the neck or head.
14—Pain or soreness in the kidneys.
15—Pain or swelling of the joints.
16—Pain and swelling of the muscles
17—Pain and soreness in nerves.
18—Acute or chronic rheumatism.

This Certificate

Is Good for the Free Treatment

if you write at once and send your name.

SEND NO MONEY and remember that you are under no obligations whatever in sending your name and address. But when you do send your name and address we are under obligations to send you the free treatment as promised, and then, of course, as soon as you see the wonderful quick relief this free treatment gives you, you will be glad to recommend the treatment to your friends, who ought not to object to paying for the treatment, when the worth of this wonderful treatment (sent free to you) has already been **proved** in your case. So, if you are wise, you will not delay, but will write at once for this wonderful free treatment. Write to

Dr. T. FRANK LYNOTT,
1692 Pontiac Building, Chicago, Illinois

FREE TREATMENT CERTIFICATE

What is Your Name? ....
State plainly, Mr., Mrs. or Miss.

What is Your Address? ....

What Symptoms of Kidney Trouble Have You? ....
Give numbers from table above—that is all.

What is your age? .... *Married?* ....

Just fill out the above—nothing to sign, you see Just answer the questions and be sure to give your name and address. The **FREE** treatment will then be sent **at once, prepaid.** It will be up to you to say whether you want to recommend it, and you are under no obligations whatever. Cut out this certificate (or write a letter describing your symptoms) and mail to

Dr. T. FRANK LYNOTT, 1692 Pontiac Bldg., CHICAGO, Ill.